Military Miniatures

IN REVIEW

Fantastic Plastic!

Killer Cromwell: the shiny new Tamiya kit

DML's all new T34/85

Alan's Tiger Cub: the Panzer IF

ICM's whopping new T28

Tamiya's Jeep

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ON THE COVER:

It's a plethora of plastic! The new Tamiya Cromwell leads the way in our onslaught of styrene. The kit is virtually out of the box with a ton of dry transfers decorating it. The crew is basically Hornet parts with the two turret riders being their British Tank Crew at Rest figure. Both are standing on the platform provided inside the turret—it's just the right height. The driver guy is one of the half figures from their British Tank Crew set. The heads all come from their British Heads with Berets set. Look for the full story of the Cromwell kit, plus detailed photos of the real deal beginning on page 25.

From Your Editor

As is my habit, I will now chatter about something completely irrelevant to the rest of the world. I have gone on and on about what kits I want to see and I even have had the nerve to make a list. Now I'm going to go on about things other than kits. Let's call these neat bits. These can be add-ons or tools, conversions or whatever. These things tend to make you go "hey, that's cool, how come no one ever did that before?" A couple of examples. The wheel painting template that Royal offers. It's keyed to the sizes of all the most popular kits and works like a charm. Hudson & Allen found a teeny plant that looks exactly like pine boughs in 1/35th scale—it's even dark green. Neat. Verlinden recently started cramming dozens of very useful bits into one box and calling it "Value Packs." Things like gas cans, spare hands (who can't use an extra hand?), heads and other good stuff. Remedy Models offers a little Zimmerit set, which is a small tool and heads with different patterns all in white metal. Tank Work Shop offers a similar set for the StuG, with metal waffle type stamps neatly mounted on wooden blocks.

So hopefully you get the idea. Stuff to make your modeling life a little easier and your models a little better. Nothing overwhelming, just nice and subtle.

O.K. Now for my list.

I'd love to see someone come up with more workable idler wheels. As many of you know, when working with link-to-link tracks it's important to keep the proper amount of tension in the track. This is especially important when using the non-workable type on tanks with torsion bar suspensions. If the tank is even half way accurate, it will reflect the real thing in that the runs are not of identical length. The way real tankers deal with this is to simply adjust the idlers.

Now there's no generic way to do this (I think). Each vehicle will have to be dealt with individually. I say start with the majors, Panzer III (and therefore StuG), Panzer IVs, Tiger and the Sherman. That last one is really a toughie. The Sherman track was live, meaning it always wants to curl up in the direction of the inside of the links. This means no sag—at all. Only some M4A4s get a little in the back.

Next on my list is headlights. Most manufacturers ignore clear parts in their kits. Admittedly, glass parts on a tank are going to get grunged up pretty quickly, but I've seen a surprising number of photos that show the glass peeking through. DML recently impressed the hell out of me by putting a clear glass lens in its T-34 kits. It would really be cool if someone could cast the major head and tail light sets with a void that could receive the proper MV lens.

You know the sticky end of a Post-It note? That adhesive they use is pretty amazing. It sticks to anything (for a little while) and it lays down very flat. How about making disposable stencils out of this stuff? Paper is more flexible than an etched sheet and it's much more likely to conform to the surface of the model. That adhesive is so gentle that it won't pull paint off. I actually have used this method with the existing notes, but the glue strip is only half an inch, so it limits the size and type of marking. I had to cut out the strip, but it's theoretically possible to die-cut the various markings, then apply the glue. I'm not sure, but I think the glue was available in spray form at one time (don't get that confused with "Spray Mount," another 3M product—this stuff will take paint off a real tank).

The good 'ol M3 half-track. It was used by all the WW2 allies in various forms and it was certainly more numerous than the German 251. We have several kits of it from Tamiya and in a general sense, they are O.K. kits. My beef is that the suspension is awful. Tamiya did an good job with the rest of the kit, but the drive and idler wheels, bogies and tracks don't look right. My attention was recently called back to these models when KMC did their excellent M3 Motor Carriage conversion. But I just can't get by that suspension.

A few years ago, The Show Modelling took a crack at the suspension by attempting to render the drive sprocket and idler wheels in photo-etched brass (to give credit where credit is due, this idea was first proposed in Fine Scale Modeler back in 1983). The idea was to curl up these long strips into the wheels. The tough part (O.K. make that impossible part) was getting them perfectly round. Wheels generally have that tendency. Also, the actual part was not made up of flat plates. It was two cast items with a tooth sprocket in between.

How about doing this in cast brass? It seems the perfect candidate with all those thing shapes. The other possibility is white metal. The sprocket could be broken into several pieces, then assembled by the modeler. I'm thinking white metal for the tracks, too. These were not conventional link tracks at all. Rather they were a continuous band of rubber and metal that encased two steel rods. A rather ingenious system that is still in use on the West German Weisel airborne vehicle. Point is, you can't just do little links. But a continuous band of white metal might do the trick. You could show the very slight sag and it would also conform to the idler and drive sprocket. The only trick would be figuring out how to close the loop so you can't see it.

So what's your idea? Let's get a little dialog going. Send me some letters and maybe a budding entrepreneur out there will give it a go.

Now I know how that rabbit feels...

We are particularly late this time around. This is mostly due to the completion of the Modeler's Guide to the 1/35th Scale Universe. It was a lot more work than we thought. But it is now complete and waiting for you at your local shop or mail order outlet.

As a result of all this we plan to cram a few issues in a short amount of space to help make up the schedule (remember issues 13-14?). We have a ton of interesting models under construction for the next few issues. This inevitably will spill into issues 17 and 18, so hang on.

What follows this time is an avalanche of styrene with most of what is new over the last four months or so. A few of the features even include update sets within (one of the few benefits to being tardy). Dig in!

—Pat Stansell

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Magazine Boy
PAT STANSELL

Editorial Contributors
BARRY BEAUDRY
GLEN BROMAN
KEN DUGAN
RANDY JOHNSON
JOE MORGAN
CHRIS MROSKO
KEYSER SOZE
NICK VANSTON

Master Builder
ROLANDO GUTIERREZ

Advertising Sales
JOHN SMALL
1-888-999-MMIR

Principal Photography
PAT STANSELL
WARREN PIECE

Additional Photography
CHRIS MROSKO
BARRY BEAUDRY

Staff Artists
STIMPSON J. KATT
RHEN HOEK

Production Coordinator
ENNY MUNKEE

Midnight Toker
TONY BONITATIBUS

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The Mail Sack

Beautiful Colors

I took note of a letter in Issue 14 (Color My World) by Steve Lipke. While I agree with him about color shades and the fact that there is never an exact color match, I take umbrage at his closing comments about "Serious Modelers."

I think it's great if you build a Sherman, paint it purple and are happy with your model. But I've known too many people who start rationalizing major errors, such as a Panther G in Afrika Korp markings, 88mm KwK43 1/71 ammo being loaded onto a Panzer IV, gas being poured into a tank's radiator, and (a personal favorite), a soldier standing erect holding six connected Panzer IV track links between his outstretched arms.

I consider myself a serious modeler. I try to build models as technically and historically correct as possible. When I show off my work, I expect it to be examined and criticized. It's the only way I know to learn and improve. Unfortunately, nowadays, many people act like model building should be a mutual admiration society.

—David A. Kimbrell

The term "Serious Modeler" is reserved for those who are too hyper critical of a model to the point that they discourage further effort by that modeler. Most would not argue in favor of basic accuracy but mistakes do happen and as Mr. Kimbrell points out, that's how we learn. The idea is not to crush a follow modeler's desire to build another model by the harshness of your criticism. Tact and manners still play a role. Read on...

Praise be! Someone has spoken up about vehicle colors. I just hope some of those model contest judges take notice.

I am a retired Army grunt who spent half my time in a Bradley as a Jr. CDAT (Computerized Dumb Ass Tanker) for those who don't know better.

After 20-plus years building models, I often have wondered where some modelers got their ideas about weathering/washing their vehicles. Their seems to be a fad to have all kinds of washes and such on every weld line, nut, bolt or whatever. It may look cool, but it is not what a military vehicle in the field looks like.

I know it's just a hobby, but tell that to some judge with a pen light and wearing watch-maker's glasses. All one has to do is go look at a vehicle in the field, not on display, and see where the dirt goes.

Per your article in Issue 13, another big effect on the coloring of a vehicle is spilled fuel, both from careless fueling and heat expansion causing fuel to seep out of fuel tanks. This sloshes around on everything—rucksacks, tarps, etc. It attracts dirt and does not dry for a long time. Also, for modern vehicles, washing with pressure hoses peels the paint off road wheels, sprockets, etc.

To show a vehicle out of the field, you better show it stripped of all outside tools or one of those old-time sergeants will (secure it) for you. If you add in the idea of an inspection by anyone with more than railroad tracks on their collar, you're probably talking a fresh paint job to boot.

You should try Armor-All-ing the road wheels of an M2A2. Your tax money at work. As for all those prima donnas who worry about scaling the paint—get a life.

—Alan D. Morrill

Great idea for a new product! How about scale Armor-All?

✉

Anglo Armour Rocks

I recently picked up Dragon's re-release of the old AL-BY Panzerspahwagen P204(f), (Panhard P-178 in its original French service). A brief examination reveals that this kit needs a lot of help.

This realization led me to ponder the scarcity of research material available on both British and French-made, as opposed to American-bought, armor of WW2. I can find exactly one picture of the Panhard and no more. We seem to be overflowing with publications concerning German armor. In my more cynical moments, I believe a magazine dedicated solely to German armor would be able to turn a profit.

Tamiya has been known to say that "British Armour just does not sell." Why the apparent lack of interest? I believe the solution lies in the old riddle concerning which came first, the chicken or the egg. People show little interest in British/French armor because there is so little material to support their interest.

The following analogy might explain my point better. The first telephone would have been useless to its purchaser. Being the first to own one would have meant the purchaser would have no one to call. More research material will bring more models and vice versa.

I am aware that kits of British and French armor do exist, along with a certain amount of publications dedicated to them. (There actually seem to be more kits than supporting publications.) I just wish they both were better represented. After all, even the best German armor would have been useless without something to shoot at.

Lastly, if anyone out there knows of information concerning the Panhard P-178, I would appreciate hearing about it. While I am stating my wish list, does anyone make decals depicting early war Hungarian markings? The ones I refer to are shown on a Toldi on Page 77 of Squadron Signals The Eastern Front.

—Geoff Steer

This was the world before the Tamiya Cromwell. Will it be enough to satisfy the masses? As to references, good photos sometimes come in the most surprising places. A great selection of detailed Cromwell photos is found in the Fedorowicz title on Michael Wittman.

✉

Joe Jumps

Kudos to Joe Morgan for struggling through the very basic T-26 series from RPM. I am still trying to figure out that damn T-26/BT-2, though. If this thing was ever produced at all, it must have been a very small production run, since all the photos published so far of single-turret, gun-armed T-26 tanks have the BT-5 turret with 45mm gun. If any were indeed produced with the BT-2 turret (assuming this is not the figment of a Polish kit designer's fertile imagination), it should have the BT-2's gun, a Russian copy of the German Rheinmetall 3.7 cm, which everybody was buying in the early thirties (the heavier 45mm would have unbalanced the cylindrical turret—that's why the bustle was added and later enlarged). There are some written accounts (Milsom's) that suggest the first single-turret model had a 37mm, but he shows photos of 45mm-armed vehicles with early BT-5 turrets. If the thing is built as advertised, then the turret should have a slender tapering gun tube without the reinforcing sleeve seen on the 45 mm gun. Which means that Joe may have given his a bigger bang than it deserved when he installed a 45 mm. Of course, a picture may turn up next week showing I'm full of horse-pukey, too. Since I can't solve this puzzle for sure, I guess I could always buy the RPM T-26/BT-2 and a Zvesda/Italeri BT-5 and swap the turrets...THOSE versions I can document (yeah I know, I gotta shorten the Zvesda hull, but what is life without struggle). Anyhoo, keep up the good work!

—Gerald Owens

That T-26 is a toughie. We wouldn't mind seeing a good book on all the variants, especially considering all the new information that is coming out of the former Soviet Union.

✉

Panther Picadillo

Being an armor enthusiast and modeler for the past 30 years, I would like to thank your team at MMiR for finally getting it right—a magazine dedicated to the heavy metal tread heads across the world. Your genuine articles and detailed reviews are most welcome.

I noticed what I think is an isolated incident involving a recent armor publication—the *Concord Armor At War Series Panther* by Thomas Anderson. This series is a must for armor modelers and photo research historians, being affordable and featuring many new unpublished photos.

As with most armor books, there are the usual inaccurate photo captions, but most disturbing is a deliberately doctored photo of a Panther Ausf D with IR set on page 63.

Compare this photo with the Panther Ausf D on page 19 credited to W. Schneider. Look closely. Need I say more? I hope in the future that seeing still will be believing.

—Randy Roy

We are aware of this bogus photo. For those of you who have not seen it, it purports to show a Panther with a full set of IR gear. Close examination of the second photo mentioned above reveals that it is an unaltered version of the very same photo.

As scurrilous as it might seem, there are people out there who think its funny to fool legitimate authors and publishers with this type of crap. Needless to say, this is highly embarrassing for all those involved. We can say that both Concord and Mr. Anderson were unaware of any fabrication and assuredly both will scrutinize their future sources more closely!

In spite of this flap, we still feel that the Concord title is a good one. It's never a bad idea to have more than one reference source when building a model. Just because it's in print doesn't mean it's right! Studying plans and photos from difference sources can reveal some very fun and unusual details.

✉

Got a problem with any of this?

Send those comments to: Mail Sack, Military Miniatures in Review or discuss complaints, problems, wisecracks, etc. via the Internet. Find us at the handle: ***MMiR35701@aol.com***

Letters are sometimes edited for brevity, grammar, spelling, national security concerns and other stuff.

We sincerely regret that we rarely, if ever, are able to personally enter into correspondence with our readers.

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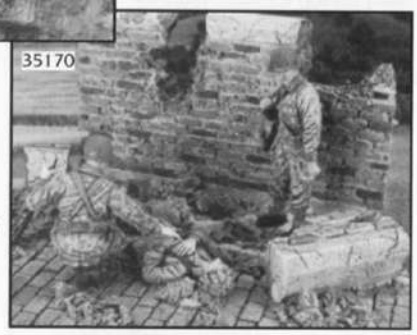

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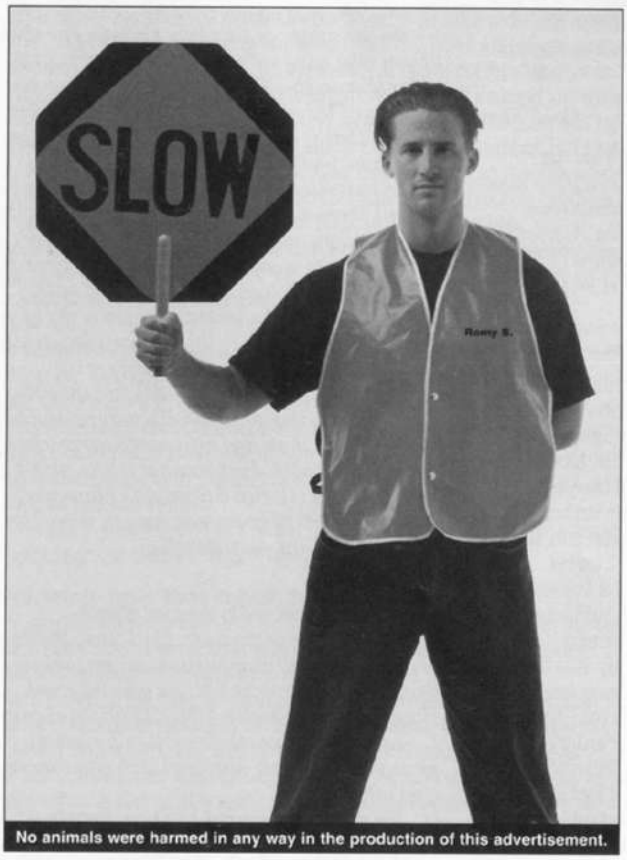

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The Year in Preview

AA's mighty Faun. Inset: the Crusader Primer Mover conversion.

Aber

Etch me baby, etch me! More pretty stuff from the Aberites. 35-038 is for the Tamiya **Panzer III, Ausf. L (PzKpfw III).** It's a two piece set which includes interior goodies, price $25.99. 35-039, **Sturmgeschütz III, Ausf. A (Sdkfz. 142)**, for the Dragon kit is also two sheets at $21.49. Both these sets contain a wealth of small parts for the Panzer III series, many of which have been previously ignored in other after market sets.

S19, is your basic **Net.** This is a one piece woven brass mesh actually, beautifully rendered, at $10.99.

Aber photo-etch is available from all your favorite retail outlets.

Accurate Armour

We had a chance recently to view a few of the new pieces that are now in production from AA. This includes the magnificent **Faun tank transporter**, the **Warrior engineer vehicle conversion** and the **Crusader prime mover conversion.** AA is also going Cromwell crazy, launching no fewer than nine new sets (and more on the way) for the new Tamiya kit. Available now are C45, **Royal Marines Centaur IV conversion** ($25.10); C46, **95mm Howitzer set** ($5.11); C47, **Cromwell Armour/Cupola/Bin set** ($5.96); A47, **"Vauxhall" Hatch** ($3.19); A48, **75mm deep wading set** ($10.21); A49, **95mm deep wading set** ($10.21); A50, **British WW-II towing cables;** T62, **Cromwell Wide Track + Sprockets** and EB05 **Cromwell mesh/detail set** and .

A very exciting future item will be the **Ward LaFrance wrecker.** This was the work horse of the U.S. Army in all theaters during WW2 and a true object of love for all wrecker and recovery vehicle geeks out there. We have no precise pricing or release date, but AA is saying "next year." We'll wait here.

For more dope contact Accurate Armour Ltd. Units 15-16 Kingston Industrial Estate, Port Glascow, Inverclyde, Scotland UK, PA14 5DG or Squadron Mail order in the U.S.

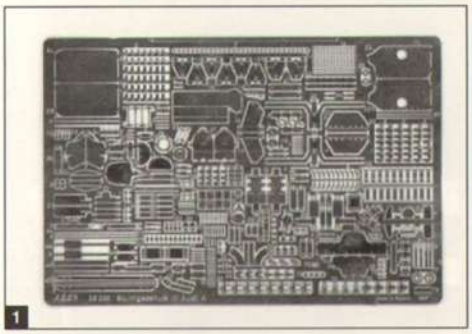
Andrea Miniatures

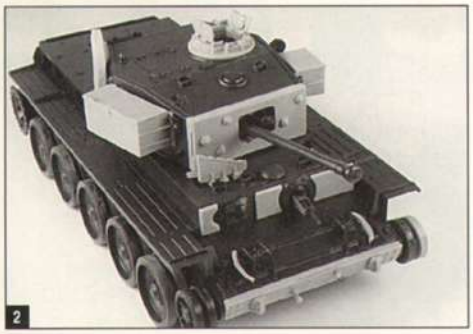
Andrea from Espana, has released a gorgeous 90mm kit (this works out to 1/18 scale) of the **BMW R75 with sidecar.** Kinda of a weird scale, but Andrea likes to do it differently. It contains over 170 white metal parts, 2 figures, photo-etch, and a resin cast base. This kit represents the ultimate in modeling technology. It is absolutely superb and highly unique. As you might expect, all this happy stuff comes at a hefty price. The model weighs in at $449.95, but VLS, the U.S. importer has been recently offering a bit of a break on the price. This is probably only temporary, so don't delay.

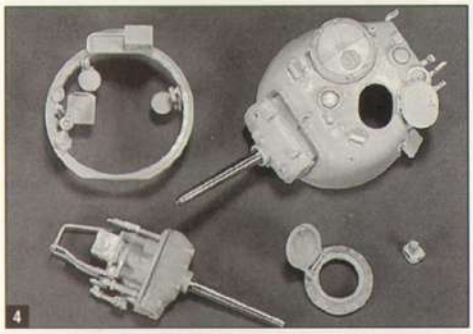
Armoured Brigade

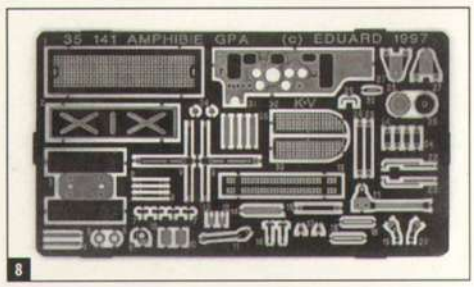
Armoured Brigade is a new company that hails from Canada (sort of like the U.S., but without the guns). They have an aggressive little line of stuff that is centered around an Allied theme. The casting quality is superb and they seem to be on the ball as far as what to release. Here's the run-down.

ABM001, is a **105mm howitzer early Sherman conversion turret**, for $25.00. ABM002, is **105mm howitzer late Sherman conversion turret**, $25.00. ABM003 creates an **Early Production 47° Glacis Plate M4 Upper Hull**, $25.00. ABM004 is a **Canadian/British Sherman IB Conversion Kit**, $25.00. ABM005, **17 Pounder Mk. II Anti-Tank Gun "Pheasant" Conversion**









1. The new StuG A sheet from Aber, 35-039.
2. AA's Cromwell Update, C47.
3. The state-of-the-art Andrea BMW.
4. Armoured Brigade's Sherman 105 turret, ABM001.
5. CMD's shiny new M48 conversion, CMD-24.
6. The new Germans from Comrades In Arms.
7. Dragon's upcoming SU-100, 6075.
8. The GPA brass set from Eduard, 35-141.
9. The Hemmt set (one of two sheets) from Eduard, 35-162.

is for the Tamiya 6 pounder kit, $25.00. AMB006 represents a **Late Style Tiger I Turret with Correct Horizontal Asymmetrical Profile** for $25.00. ABM007 is another **Late Production 47° Glacis Plate M4 Upper and Lower Hull** at $25.00. ABM008, **M8 HMC Interior Update Kit** for the Tamiya kit is $25.00. ABM0003 and 0004, ABM005 and 006 are all out now, while 007 and 008 are slated for late spring release. Chesapeake Model Designs is the U.S. distributor. Canadian and International orders should be directed to Armoured Brigade at P.O. Box 35163, Westgate P.O., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1Z 1A2.

Air Connection

Air Connection is the North American agent for the Aber line of photo-etch products as well as several other lines from Eastern Europe. We had neglected to mention them in this context in our recent *Armor Modelers Guide to the Universe* and naturally they were less than pleased. They are strictly wholesale agents, so only trade inquiries are received. Other lines that Air Connection carries are RPM/Mirage, Tech Mod and RPM/MQ and these names encompass a large range of cool subjects.

Shops interested in any of these lines can contact Air Connection at 6389 Chaumont Cr. Mississauga, ONT, L5N 2M7. Phone: 905-826-7460, fax: 905-826-6764.

Chesapeake Model Design

CMD's terrific **M-48 Patton (gasoline engine)**, resin and etched brass conversion set for the Tamiya M-48 is now shipping at $60.00. This is stock number CMD-24.

Their newest deal (CMD-26) is a very unusual conversion based around either the DML Maus or E-100 kits. It is the **proposed flak turret mounting the 8.8cm gun**. This is based on new information that has only been recently uncovered in the former Soviet Union. Neato.

Also yet to come this year is a really interesting conversion for the Tamiya Tiger IIs. This will be all the parts to create the **proposed July, 1945 design changes** as seen in the Jentz book on the Tiger II. The exact release date and price are TBA.

CMD imports a lot of good junk and more dope on this can be found in their ad on page 45.

Comrades In Arms

A new company, Comrades in Arms is offering three 1/35th scale German dudes. B1, B2, B3, are all listed as **German Infantry Marching 1944/45**. Two of them appear to be based on photos of infantry accompanying the 653 in Italy, while the other is an SS officer.

We've only seen photos so far, but we'll bring you up to date when we see the real thing. Meanwhile, drop them a line at Comrades in Arms Ltd., Unit 1, 3rd Floor, 117/127 Brook Street, Glascow G40 3AP.

Dragon Models Ltd.

We've had a look at the Dragon catalog and a talk with the U.S. agent. There are loads of interesting looking items and we can report some approximate dates as well. Let's begin!

Dragon has obtained the old ESCI 1/9th scale vehicle molds. They will be releasing at least two of the motorcycles this spring and summer. The first is 1801, and it is the **BMW R75**. This is the stand alone bike and the kit will include a straddling Feldgendarme figure molded in vinyl no less. Now don't moan over the vinyl, there is some superb work done in vinyl for the sci-fi crowd and it's as good as anything in resin, if you ask us.

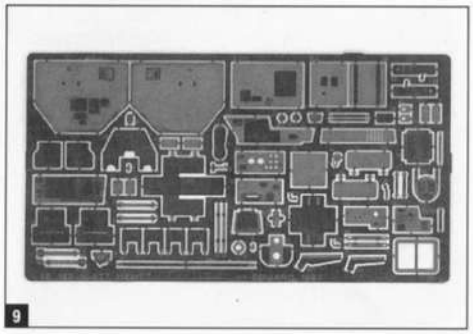
The **Zündapp KS750 motorcycle** will follow and it will be packaged with a figure of a Fallschirmjäger. Retail on these babies is TBA.

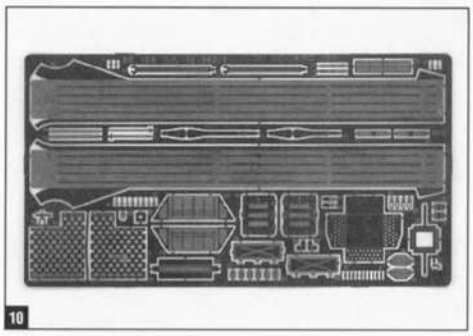
Some of the other big kits may or may not appear over the next few months and years, so keep your fingers crossed.

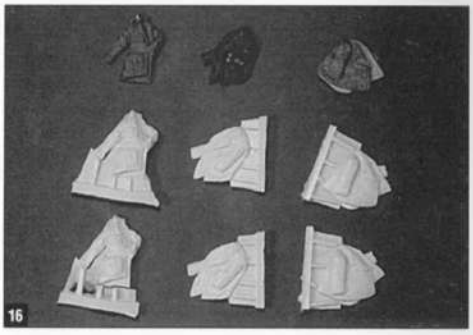
Back home in 1/35thsville, there is more action with the rail stuff. 6085 will be a **German Railway Flatbed Typ 0mmr**. This is a two axle car with low sides and it's outfitted with side MG ports and will include a crew when it's released in the spring. 6086 is a **German Railway Gondola Typ 0mmr w/AA gun crew**. The illustration shows basically the same car as 6085, but with larger sides. The gondola reference is to the small structure that rests on the back end. This is a July/August release and both cars are price TBA.

Also on the list is 6101, **Borgward IV Ausf. A Heavy Demolition Charge Vehicle**. This is that little tractor that dropped a charge off its front end. The kit is listed as the early version and it should be pretty spiffy when it comes out in the late summer. It will be released later with a Panzer III J in the box as a command vehicle under the stock number 9054.

More permutations of the T-34 are inbound. An **SU-100** (6075) should be out any minute and an **SU-85** (6096) will follow in June. A **T-34/76** is also







10. The 140/1 set (one of two sheets) from Eduard, 35-163.
11. Historex Armour Accessory's SdKfz 254.
12. Jaguar's happening Battle Plan I, 63058.
13. "Der Instructor" from Jaguar, 63060.
14. MG Team, 63051 from Jaguar.
15. Jaguar's 63049, "Inspector General."
16. The highly useful German Uniforms from Jaguar, 62825.

planned and it looks to be a 1943 model. The date on this is TBA as are all the prices.

And finally, we are again being tempted with another **"secret item."** This is simply being billed as Dragon's 100th WW2 armor kit. We don't know anything about this item, other than its stock number which is 6100. The number indicates that it will be part of the '39-45' Series, but it's anyone's guess after that.

We'll keep you posted as this develops and those with a keyboard can keep abreast of all the latest news by checking out http://www.marcopoloimport.com

Eduard

Let's go etching now, everybody's learning how, come on a safari with me... The current round of photo-etched fun from Eduard looks like this. 35-134, **Tiger IE Interior**, is a single sheet for the Academy kit, priced at $14.99. 35-141, **Ford GPA Amphibian**, brings you a single sheet of brass for the older Tamiya kit at $9.99. 35-147, **Oak Leaves**, the name says it all for this single sheet of brass at $11.99. 35-148, **Chestnut Leaves**, more falling leaves on this single sheet, also priced at $11.99. 35-152, **Maple Leaves**, it's Autumn in Vermont with this single sheet, priced at $11.99. 35-154, **Opel Blitz 3t Type S**, two sheets of brass for the Italeri kit, priced at $19.99. 35-155, **SdKfz 265 KI PzBefw. 1B**, more brass, two sheets, and acetate gauges at $19.99. 35-156, **Flakpanzer Wirbelwind**, two frets for the price of $19.99. 35-157, **ISU-152 SPG**, you guessed it, two sheets of brass at $14.99. 35-158, **M3 Grant Mk.I**, two big sheets for $19.99. 35-159, **Modern Floor Plate**, is that weird cross-hatch stuff. This is one sheet divided into two sections, priced at $14.99. 35-160, **M981 FISTV**, two brass sheets for the Academy kit, $14.99. 35-161, **M13/40** offers a single sheet for the Italeri kit, $11.99. 35-162, **M977 Hemmtt** a double sheet for the Italeri kit, $19.99. 35-163, **SdKfz 140/1**, two sheets of glorious brass for the new kit from VM Models, $19.99. 35-164, **SAS Land Rover**, two sheets of brass, plus gauges on clear acetate for the Tamiya kit, $14.99. 35-165, **SU-100**, a single sheet of brass here for the Italeri kit $14.99. 35-166, **M-997 Ambulance**, double sheet of brass with clear acetate gauges for Minicraft kit, $14.99. 35-167 **M548A1 TCC**, more acetate gauges with your two sheets of brass for the AFV Club kit, $14.99.

For more information on Eduard sets see their ad nearby.

Historex Armour Accessories

HAA has a modest line of resin kits (actually only one so far) and is very gradually expanding it. Next up in the line is the WW2 **German SdKfz. 254 wheel/track armored car**. This is an intriguing little vehicle that has never been done before in either resin or plastic. The kit looks quite good and the master pattern was done by Tony Greenland, famous of both song and story.

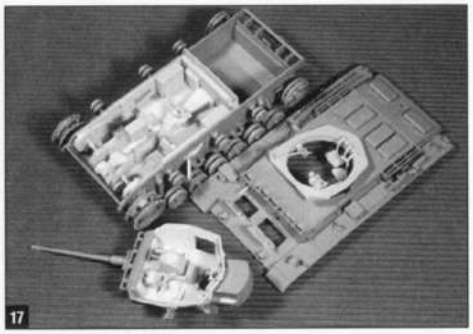
We still await a precise release date and price. Interested (or interesting) individuals can contact Historex Agents, 157 Snargates Street, Dover Kent CT17 9BZ, United Kingdom. Those with the "webbed" fingers can dial up http://www.historex-agents.demon.co.uk

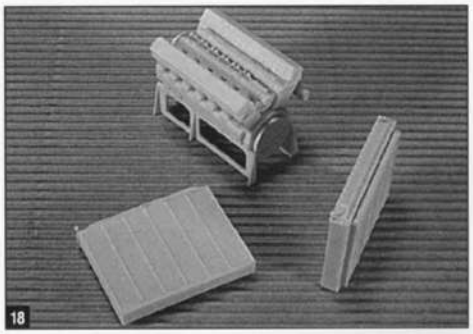
Jaguar Models

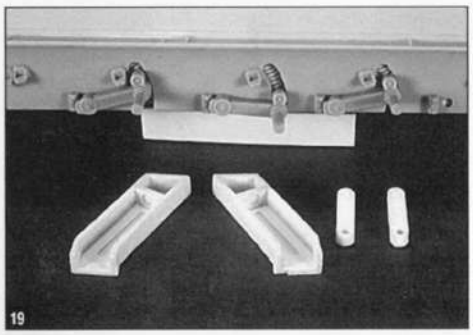
Jaguar has really been cranking out some superb stuff as of late (and will continue to do so). Here's the rundown.

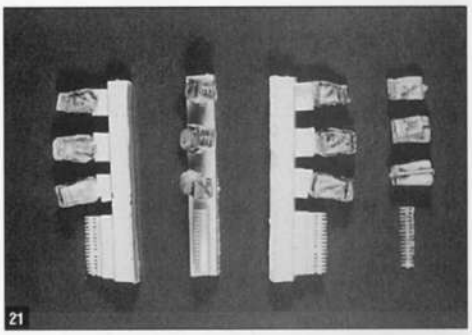
63049, **MG team, Stalingrad** is two figures with a resin base for $23.98. 63051, **Inspector General**, two walking figures with base at $19.98. 63057 is **Battle for Berlin**. It depicts 2 German soldiers armed with Panzerfausts running to or from their next target while trying to defend their city. Priced at $21.98 with a base. 63058, **Battle Plan I**, depicts two Panzer commanders during battle briefing. This set is complete with ammo crates and ammo, priced at $23.98 with a base. 63059, **Battle Plan II**, depicts a Panzer squad leader describing his plans to his tank commanders. 2 figure set, priced at $21.98 with a base. 63060, **Der Instructor** shows an experienced panzer jäger giving lessons to less experienced soldiers. This piece is based on a photo from the book *God, Honor, Fatherland* and it includes a base, black board and a full load of anti-tank weapons. Priced at $19.98. 63061, **Feldgendarmerie** is a 2 figure set hanging out at a street corner. The included base comes with pavement and brick fence, priced at $23.98.

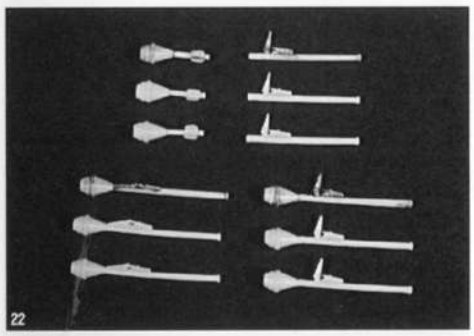
A handful of useful accessories rounds it out. 63513, is a set of **Panzerfaust** for $4.98. This includes weapons with detached charges. 63514, **MG Ammo Bags** is the tank fabric type for $4.98. 63515, is **Tank Mounted MG34 System** for $4.98. 63516, **Panzer IV Transmission Cover**, for DML kits, $4.98. 63518 is **Panzer III L Interior**, a complete inside scoop for the Tamiya kit. $45.98 takes it home. 63520 is a phenomenal resin **Windmill** of

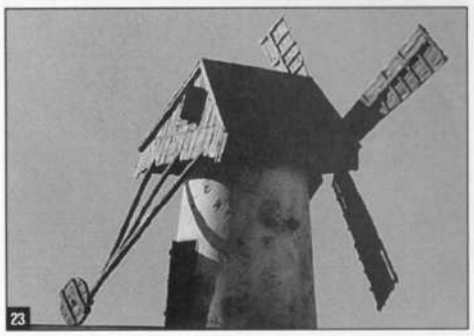


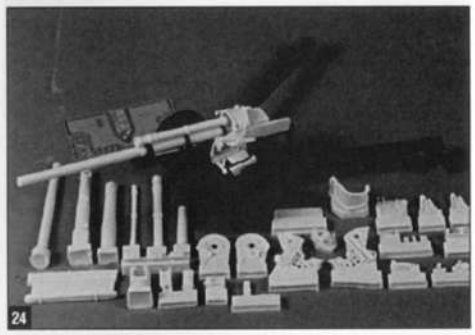












17. Jaguar's Panzer III L interior, 63518.
18. The stand alone T-34 engine from Jaguar, 63523.
19. Jaguar's T-34 Movable Suspension, 63823.
20. The comprehensive T-34/85 interior from Jaguar, 63524.
21. Jaguar 63514, MG Ammo Bags.
22. 63513, Panzerfausts from Jaguar.
23. Windmill, 63250 from Jaguar.
24. The 3 inch gun conversion from KMC.
25. KMC's T-34/85 D5T turret.
26. The T-34 fender set from MB, 2004.
27. The New Connection Pz IVA, NC 3572.
28. NC 3557, the LWS Heavy Tractor.
29. Tauchpanzer IVD, NC 3564.
30. NC 3562, the Hetzer 2cm turret conversion.
31. "Sturer Emil" from On Tack Model Co.
32. The massive 21c, K38 from Precision.
33. The limber for the boy.

the type seen on the Eastern front. This detailed and elaborate kit is price TBA.

63824 is **Cromwell wheels**. This is a set of finely detailed road wheels with light to medium duty wear and tear for the Tamiya kit, priced at $4.49. 63825, **German Uniforms**, is several finely detailed castings of German uniform jackets. These would be perfect to lay on the seat of a soft skin or across the top of an AFV. A great idea priced at $4.98.

A whole slew of stuff is out now for the T-34. 63523 is a **T-34 engine**, perfect to use in a repair shop or factory diorama, priced at $7.98. 63524 is the **T-34/85 interior** a very complete interior detail set with fully-detailed turret, removable turret roof and moving suspension, priced at $45.98. This thing is really awesome to see and is some of the best work of Jaguar's talented scratch builder, Ben Jakobsen. 63822 is **Russian SU100/T-34 engine deck detail**. This is a single resin part with the screen removed, priced at $4.49. 63823 makes up the **Russian T-34 moveable suspension**. This is separate parts to create an articulated look for a bargain $5.98.

For more information and availability see the Marco Polo ad on the inside front cover.

Kendall Model Company

A completely spiffo conversion for the old Italeri M101 105mm Howitzer is out now from KMC. This kit converts the 105 to the **3" gun version** used in the Battle of the Bulge (to name one place) and it contains resin parts and an extensive photo-etched sheet that includes the entire shield and other parts. This is 35-1008 and the retail is a mere $18.99.

A new **T-34 turret** is also due. This resin kit will depict the earliest of the 85mm gun versions, the D5T. It's intended for the Tamiya T-34/76 kits (with rounded front fenders) but may also work with future DML kits. Price and release date are TBA.

KMC stuff is sold all over, but for a retailer near you contact KMC, 18495 S. Dixie Highway, Box 373, Miami FL 33157 or via the web at http://www.KMCMiami.com

MB Models

MB has been pretty quiet with kits this year, but they are now starting to do some stand alone brass sets. The first is 2004, **T-34 fender set**. This a complete set for the DML T-34/85 kit and it includes the large side pieces and the rounded front panels as well. It also contains a few bits for the fuel drums. This set retails for $16.95.

Next up is 2005, a general **T-34 Detailing Set**, which includes screens and other details for the DML kit. Retail $14.95.

Number 2006 is a fairly comprehensive set for the AFV Club **M18 Hellcat kit**. This includes nearly 100 parts with fender panels, screens and tie-downs for $16.95.

For more information contact MB Models at 622 Old Trolley Road, Summerville, SC 29485. Phone: 843-821-3558, fax: 843-821-3561. E-mail MBishop446@aol.com.

ModelKasten

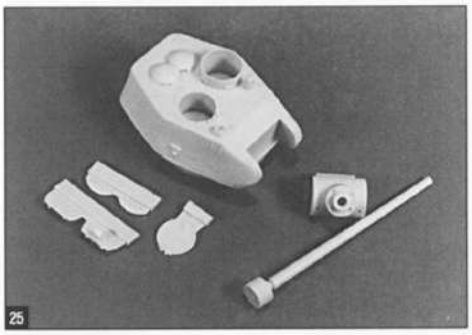
We have the MK list for the entire year, do you want to know what it is? O.K., here you go. In the "A" series of accessories we have A-9, **Drive Sprocket and Idler Wheel Set, for Panzer 38(t) and Hetzer**. This is a replacement set for the DML and Italeri kits and it fits the MK tracks. Here's a weird one for ya. K-29 is **Pz.II Ausf. D (Late) Track, Road Wheel set**. Now this is the track for the Panzer II D, the Las 762 tank destroyer and light flame thrower "Flamingo." These were originally designed for Azimut to include in their Panzer II D kits. Well, MK is finally releasing them as separate items. A little funny though, as the only kits to use them with are the Azimut kits, which already contain them! Incidentally, the tracks are the same as the ones on the early Panzer III A-D. At any rate, don't forget that these are in the "K" series which means they are non-functional.

The following "SK" functional track sets will be released during 1998: SK-34 for the **T-34/M42** (Feb.), SK-35 for the **T-34/M40** (March), SK-36 for the **M113** (April), SK-37 for the **T-34/M41** (May), SK-38 for the **Pz. 35(t)** (June), SK-39 for the **M4** (July), SK-40 for the **M3** (Aug.), SK-41 for the **T-26** (Sept.), SK-42 also for the **M4** (Oct.), SK-43 for the **VK1801/Pz I F** (Nov.), and SK-44 for the **T-28** (Dec.).

SK-39 and SK-42 are both for the Sherman, but the only information we have is that they are labeled set "A" and set "B." We believe that SK-40 is for the M3 Stuart. None of the above sets has made it to the U.S. as of this writing. Precise release dates in the U.S. are TBA as are the prices.

New Connection

These dudes are truly a busy bunch of boys. The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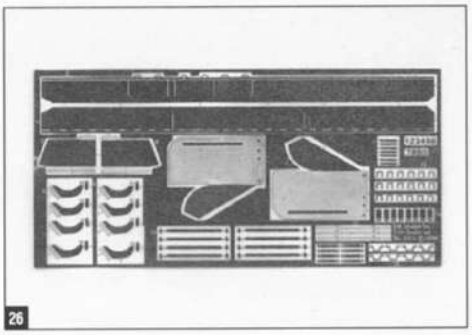
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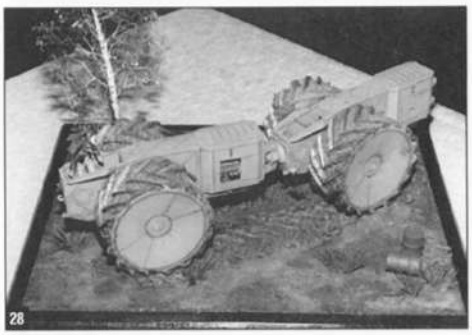
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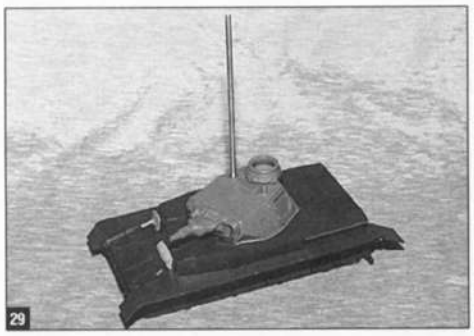
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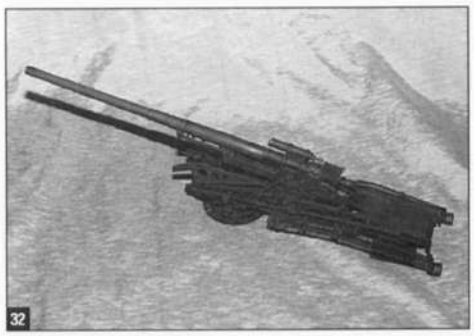
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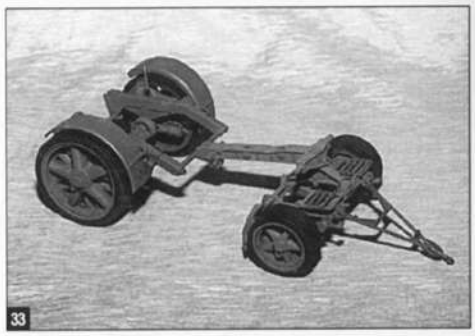
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following is our version of catch-up and it includes both new and newly released items as of the Trucks and Tracks show this past February. The U.S. importer, Chesapeake Model Designs (or CMD as we affectionately call them), may or may not have stock as of yet however. Most of it should show up here by late spring or early summer.

NC3533, **5cm kwk L60 Panzer III**, is a metal replacement barrel for Panzer III late J, L and M versions. NC 3555, **G13 Swiss Post-war Hetzer conversion**, makes up the more modern version of the Hetzer. Barrel, muzzle, idler and other parts for Dragon kit 6060 at $41.95. NC 3556, **Turned metal barrel-Wiesel 2cm Rh 202**, is for the AFV Club Wiesel kit 35S05 for $6.95. NC 3557, **LW5 LausterWargel Heavy Tractor** is the WW2 German late war prototype for gigantic four-wheeled tractor. This used to be known as a mine detonating vehicle but it is in fact a heavy duty tractor designed to create instant earth works on the Ostfront. This is a very comprehensive model and it includes an interior, engine and drive train for $109.95. NC 3558, **Katzchen APC conversion** is the WW2 experimental armored personnel carrier prototype for the 38(t). For Dragon kits 6030 and 6060 at $57.95. NC 3559, **Jerry Cans with holders, WW2 German**. Resin cans with photo-etched holders for $7.95. NC 3560, **German Telescopic Radio mast, WW2 German**. For various armored cars and radio vehicles priced at $7.95. NC 3561, **German radio set, WW2 German** is $11.95. NC 3562, **Hetzer Aufklarer 2cm turret conversion, WW2 German**. This is the 2cm gun mounted on the chassis of the Hetzer. For Dragon kits 6030 and 6060 price TBA. NC 3563, **Hetzer simplified Pz. IV turret conversion, WW2 German prototype tank.** Sort of a Panzer IV/Hetzer hybrid, for Dragon kits 6030 and 6060 price TBA. NC 3564, **Tauchpanzer IV D conversion (deep wading), WW2 German**. Parts to create an amphibious version of the Panzer IV D. For Tamiya 35096 price TBA. NC 3565, **Tauchpanzer III "Operation Sea Lion,"** Parts to create an amphibious version of the Panzer III. For Dragon 9033 price TBA. NC 3566, **Jagdpanzer 38D**, WW2 German prototype of elongated tank destroyer based on the Hetzer. For Dragon 6030 or 6060, once again price TBA. NC 3567, **Turned metal barrel M24 Chaffee**. For Italeri 0244, $6.95. NC 3568, **Turned barrel for T-34/85**, WW2 Russian. For Maquette or Dragon kits at $6.95.

Take a breath.

NC 3569, is **2cm flak ammunition boxes**, WW2 German. For any 2cm type gun for $11.95. NC 3570, **Turned metal barrel for M4 Sherman**, WW2 U.S. For any 75mm armed Sherman kit for a mere $7.95. NC 3571, **42cm grenades**, WW2 German. The type used in the Panzerwerfer 42 rocket launcher, $14.95. And, saving one of the best for last, is NC 3572, **Panzer IVA conversion.** This is for the Tamiya D kit (35096) and includes a detailed turret and lots of other gear to create the early version of this famous WW2 German tank for $46.95.

On Track Model Co.

The newest kit from this maker of excellent resin kits is the **WW2 German SP gun VK3001 "Sturer Emil."** For those of you with a copy of the *Encyclopedia of German Tanks*, look on Page 135. For those of you who don't, this was the weird looking prototype of the Tiger (the one that didn't get accepted) with a big ol' 12.8cm blaster plopped into the superstructure.

The kit is a real surprise, not only being composed of resin parts but also containing a complete set of injection molded roadwheels and tracks. The tracks are a completely unique type and the links provided even include open horns. Way cool.

If you'd like to get your hands on the kit, it is carried by R&J Enterprises who look for around $130.00 worth of cabbage to ship it.

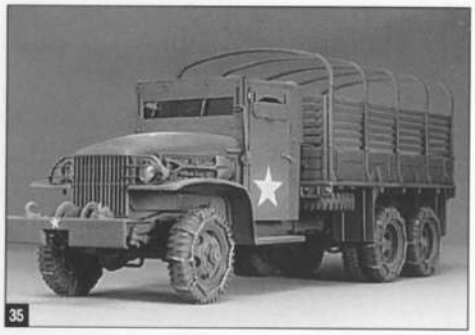
Precision Models

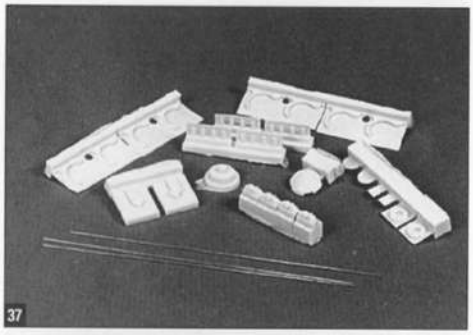
Our Belgian friends have given birth to yet anther mind blowing German WW2 artillery piece. They are now the proud parents of a bouncing **21cm K38**. He's a big bastard, that's for sure. The finished kit is well over two feet long. It's made up of resin pieces with photo-etched tread plate. The casting quality and workmanship of this model is as we have come to expect: dazzling. This is kit number 35.033 and the U.S. retail is $154.95. A nicely rendered limber is also available. This is 35.034 and the price tag here is $56.95. Great stuff!

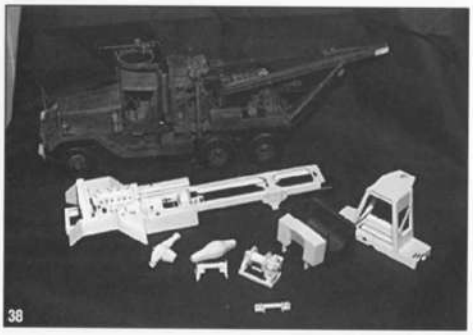
Precision kits are available through Chesapeake Model Designs.

Roger Saunders & Associates

Roger and Co. have taken over responsibility of production and sales of the Wolf line of model products. Saunders will be offering a new catalogue for both ranges. The price of the catalogue will be approximately $3.50 and it can be ordered direct







34. Sovereign's Panzer IIIA.
35. The TWS CCKW Armor Adaptation kit.
36. TWS chain wheels and deep-wading kit for the Tamiya jeep.
37. The TWS T-34 update set for Tamiya.
38. AA's future Ward LaFrance wrecker (so what if it's not in order?).
39. The new Tech Mod T-50 in styrene.
40. Yanks deep wading set for the Tamiya M3.
41. Warrior's excellent SS POWs.

from Hornet Models at 290 Queen's Road, London SE14 5JN, United Kingdom.

Sovereign

Sovereign has gone and done the **Panzer III Ausf. A.** How a-bout that?! This is the very early version with the funky hull and large road wheels. The kit is resin with white metal detail parts and link-to-link tracks. The stock number is SOV 3A and the U.S. retail is around $90.00 or so. These babies can be had through R&J in the U.S. and through Historex Agents elsewhere (see address above).

Look for a complete review of this kit in the next issue of MMiR.

Tank Workshop

We have been somewhat remiss in covering all the excellent goodies from TWS. A few of the very new items appear in the GMC and Jeep articles later in this book. Here is a fuller run down on what's new. TTWA0049, **2 1/2 ton GMC Railroad Wheels**, includes two sections of RR tracks and retails at $16.00. TTWA0050, **Jeep wheels with chains**, for the new Tamiya kit is $6.00. TTWA0051, **M923A2 Wheel Set**, includes a set of 7 wheels and gas tank for USMC modification, $15.50. TTWA0054, **M4A2 Engine Compartment**, combines numbers 0053 and 0024 to convert the Tamiya M4 and M4A3, priced at $15.50. TTWA0058, **MB/GPW Armor Adaptation Kit**, photo-etch-light armor for Tamiya Jeep at $8.50. TTWA0059, **Air Intake Hose and Exhaust Pipe, deep-wading kit** for the new Tamiya Jeep priced at $6.50. TTWA000, **CCKW Armor Adaptation Kit**, photo-etch armor cab for the Tamiya GMC 2 1/2 ton, $12.75.

The entire line of Tank Maker T-34 update kits is now available through TWS. All the following items are designed to modify the entire line of Tamiya kits. STZ002, **T-34/76 Soft edge Turret Shell**, $8.00. STZ003, **T-34/76 Hard-edge Turret Shell**, $8.00. STZ004, **Replacement Wheel Hubs** for Tamiya T-34/76/85, SU122, and SU85, $3.00. STZ005, **1943 Pattern Pierced Ribbed Road Wheel**, $12.00. STZ006, **122mm Gun Barrel**, resin replacement barrel for Tamiya SU122, $2.00. STZ007, **T-34 Replacement Engine Cover**, for Tamiya kits, $2.00. STZ008, **T-34 Improvement Set**, for Tamiya kits, $8.00. STZ010, **T-34 (1940-41) Hull Conversion**, for Tamiya T-34 1942/43 kits, $6.00. STZ0011, **1942 Up-armed Turret Leningrad Appliqué Version**, for Tamiya T-34 1942/43 kits, $15.00. STZ012, **T-34/76 Laminate Turret Shell**, $8.00. STZ013, **T-34 Mouse Ear Hatches**, $2.00. STZ014, **T-34 Mouse Ear Roof Insert with Hatches**, $4.00. STZ015, **T-34 Strap and Rod Grab Handles**, $2.00 STZ-0016, **SU-85 Mantlet with lift ring**, $2.00. For ordering information see the TWS ad elsewhere in the mag.

Tech Mod

Not a name that is very common in these pages, we have received info on at least one of their new armor kits. It is an all styrene **T-50**. The kit is surprisingly good and is molded in all-white styrene. It comes with highly detailed link-to-link tracks which each include a separate track horn. The retail on this little beasty is a mere $19.99.

The kits are being brought into North America by the same people that bring in Aber photo-etch, Air Connection. For more information see the heading above.

Yanks Miniatures

Always the busy ones, Yanks offers up the following new juicy bits. 9611, **US Tankers Rearming** (43-45), set of 2 in mid-war uniforms, $18.00. 9612, **US Wounded Tanker Bailout**, set of 2 tankers escaping from tank, one leaping, one stumbling away, $18.00. 9617, **US Tank Crew Multi-purpose**, set of four 3/4 figures for American tank hatches, $25.00. 9626, **Russian Street Fighters**. These 2 figures represent Soviet infantrymen as they appeared during WW2 and were created to portray typical motorized infantry, priced at $18.00. 9712, **US Tanker Heads #2**, 6 heads with helmets, $8.96. 9715, **M-5/M-8 US Light Tank Deep Water Fording Trunks**, one set of wet water wear for the Tamiya kit at $20.00 (originally reported as 9712) 9716, **US Tank Riders Set #2**, originally designated by the manufacturer as 9713, and five figure follow up to #1, $49.95 (slated for late Spring of 1998). 9717, **US Infantryman Running with M1 Rifle**, $11.50. 9718, **US Infantry In Ponchos Eating Chow**, 3 figures scheduled for April '98 release, $29.95. 9719, **US Heads In Plain M-1 Helmets Set #2**, 6 figure set, $8.95.

For more skinny on Yanks, see their ad (dammit!).

VLS Mail Order

Hey, hey, hey! Didja know that VLS has got a whole bunch of new lines? They are now the exclu-

sive U.S. reps for **VM Co., Alan Hobby** and **Grief Accessories** (lots of neato detailing bits). They are also now distributing the entire Aber line of photo-etched stuff and the line of little white metal furniture from **Phoenix.**

You go Joe.

There are also several very interesting items coming out from these guys in the form of update/conversion sets. One case in point is the new **KV engine and detailing set** (VP1329 at $19.95). This is for the old Tamiya kits and it includes over 200 bits and pieces to detail out the ol' boy. Throw on some Friul tracks and those Yoshida fenders—we're talkin' awesome stuff here baby!

VLS is also representing Jordi Rubio in the U.S. and they have sent along the following list of new stuff from them. JR 34, **US 90mm** (for the Pershing, etc.), $11.95; JR 43, **German 10.5cm Saukopf** (for the Sturmhaubitze 42G), $18.50; JR 44, **US 105mm M4** (for the appropriate Sherman), $12.95; JR 45 **US 75mm M6** (for the M24 Chaffee), $5.95 and JR 46, **7.5cm KwK L/48** (for the Panzer IV G, H, & J), $12.95. Remember the "JR" prefix will equate to "TG" in any of the Jordi Rubio literature.

As always there's more to come in just about every subject, so keep your eyes peeled (yuck).

VVSS Arsenal

What if Santa walked out of his workshop one day and forgot to tell the elves to take a break? Well, something like this is apparently happening to Arsenal, because they can't seem to stop producing and releasing new stuff! Those of you who have purchased our "Guide to the Universe" book will find the complete listing there. It now includes a bewildering variety of modern Russian stuff, too. Such items as the **BTR-60PA**, the **BTR-60PB**, the **BTR-60PBU Command** and the **R-145 Armored Radio Station** all are included in the list. These are only a very few of the many items in their massive product selection. And word has it that more gets announced and released every month.

All the kits are resin, white metal and photo-etched deals and although the kits are simple, they can be built into very competent models.

For more information contact their U.S. distributor, Eastern Front Hobbies, P.O. Box 473, Franklin, NJ 07416

Warriors

In amongst the avalanche of figgys from these guys, we mention the following. 35185, **Waffen SS POW's** is a three figure set riding the hood of a jeep for $32.95. 35186 is a **Surrendering Waffen SS Officer** for $12.95. 35187 depicts an **Wehrmacht General** and he also sells for $12.95. 35188, **Waffen SS Panzerknacker Team** is two tank destroying dudes for $23.95. 35189 is **American Head No. 4** for $8.95. 35191 is **German Head Set No. 23** (already?) also for $8.95. 35193 is **Russian Soldier Pulling Maxim MG** at $15.95. 35194 is a neat one, **Waffen SS Machine Gunner Running** for $12.95. Very timely is **British Cromwell Crew**, 35195. 2 full figures and 2 half-dudes for $32.95. 35196 is **American Soldier Kneeling** at $12.95. 35197, **German Head Set No. 24** is $8.95. 35199 is a **Waffen SS PAK 40 Crew - Set No. 1.** This is a three figure set for $32.95. Here's a weird one: 35200 **Adolf Hitler - Early War.** An interesting follow-up to the earlier late war figure at $13.95. 35201 is **Waffen SS PAK 40 Crew - Set No. 2**, another three figure set for $23.95.

Warrior continues dabbling in small vehicle items with 35192, **38(t) Damaged Roadwheels** at $12.95. 35198 will be a set of **M18 Hellcat Damaged Roadwheels** also for $12.95.

Look for the truly wacky in the form of a **Berlin Sewer Diorama** in 1/16th scale (16012). This is based on the earlier 1/35th scale set and will be an "instant dio" with base and all the goodies for $199.95. Also look for **Waffen SS Panzerknacker - East Prussia** (9040). This is another of John Rosengrant's beauties in 1/9th scale for $99.95.

For more information see the Warriors ad in this very magazine.

On the Tubage

Die Deutschen Panzer

8 volume video set, approx 1 hour each, B&W
by Chronos Videos
$29.98 each

Die Deutschen Panzer is an eight tape series by the guys at Chronos Films. The series draws exclusively on wartime German footage and each title compiles approximately 60 minutes of Panzer pleasure. The eight titles are as follows.

No. 1 CHR 006 Tiger & Kingtiger
No. 2 CHR 007 Panther
No. 3 CHR 008 Panzer IV
No. 4 CHR 009 Panzer III
No. 5 CHR 010 Light Panzers I & II, 35(t) and 38(t)

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Cromwell 1/35th	Nemrod	Taku Forts
David F. Grieve	New Order	Thistle
David Parkins	Nimix	Tiny Troopers
Decima	Mascot/Starlight	Trillion
DES Kit	Metal Models	Ulrich Puchala
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4. Jagdpanther 38(t) Hetzer
5. Russian Heavy Tank KV-1
6. M4A3 76mm Sherman
7. King Tiger Sd. Kfz. 182
8. Panther Ausf. G Sd. Kfz. 171
9. Tiger I Ausf. E Sd. Kfz. 181
10. U.S. 155mm Cannon Long Tom
11. German 88mm Flak 18
12. Schwimmwagen Type K2s
13. PKW K1 Kübelwagen
14. Hanomag Sd. Kfz. 251
15. Jagdtiger
16. Anti Tank Gun IV Nashorn
17. Russian Medium Tank T-34/76
18. Mittler 8 ton Sd. Kfz. 7 KMm.11
19. Panzerkampfwagen IV Ausf. H Sd. Kfz. 161/2
20. Pz Jag Elephant Sd. Kfz. 184
21. Jagdpanther
22. Schwerer Panzerspahwagen Sd. Kfz. 232
23. Panzerkampfwagen II F/G
24. Willys Jeep

All the above kits are retailed at US $19.98 each. Postage by surface mail is 15% value of the kit, while by airmail is 40% value of the kit.

US Distributor - Sentai Distributors, Inc. at Tel: (818) 886-3113 and Fax: (818) 886-2551.

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No. 6 CHR 011 Assault Guns StuG III and StuG IV
No. 7 CHR 012 Self Propelled Weapons
No. 8 CHR 013 Half Tracks & Armored Cars

German armor freaks will undoubtedly have to have the entire set. We enjoyed them all, but highlights were the Panzer III and Light Panzer tapes. The German war photographers were at their most active during the period when these vehicles were most numerous, so the footage is elaborate and lengthy.

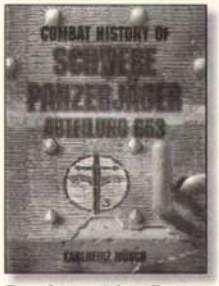
The camera also loved the StuG, especially in the last year of the war, when it was often the only thing armored moving around on the battlefield.

The Panzer IV is also excellent and includes ultra-rare color footage of a Panzer IV G on the eastern front. The heavy tank footage didn't quite have the diversity of these others but did make up for it with stuff like shots of a Sturmtiger in action in Warsaw. We recommend the entire series.

Chronos Films, Unit B12, Trinity Business Centre, 305 Rotherhithe Street, London SE16 1EY. Chronos Films are also sold through Squadron Signal Mail Order.

Book Reviews

Combat History of
Schwere Panzerjäger Abteilung 653
by Karlheinz Münch
J.J. Fedorowicz Publishing Co., 1997
558 pages, hard cover, B&W with color plates
$102.00



CAN YOU SAY HUBBA-HUBBA. We know you can. Try it now. Go on. You see, you'll need the practice after seeing the latest from Fedorowicz. The 653, for those of you who might not be familiar with every single German unit, was the one that used those wacky vehicles like a Panther with a Panzer IV turret and a T-34 with a quad flak.

This is the unit's complete history from its origins as a StuG company through its formation as a full-fledged Abteilung. Most significantly, the 653 deployed the Ferdinand (later Elephant) tank destroyer and this book is simply amass, make that swimming, in photos of these two vehicles. Photos of any quality have been hard to come by here and we almost caught ourselves thinking "wow, there's way too many cool shots in here." A good amount of self flagellation solved that.

The lion's share of the photos come from the vets and as such are not culled out of the normal archival sources. They are totally unique and there are more than a few "discoveries" in these pages. Cases in point: several good shots of the elusive BergeElephant (even one shot from the top), the operational Tiger P (with a production turret), the Panther with the Panzer IV turret (turns out it's a Bergepanther with a fixed turret—does that make it a BergeSturmgePantherPanzer IV?), and the ultra cool looking T-34 flak.

This book is the kind of thing we only wished for a few years ago and it represents in a solid fashion the kind of information that we once thought of as rumor.

And, as always, Fedorowicz books are published in a very limited fashion so it will disappear quite quickly, high price or no.

Way to go Fedorowicz-type dudes... Bring on Tigers in Combat II!

Inside The Great Tanks
by Hans Halberstadt
Windrow & Greene, Ltd., 1997
128 pages, full color throughout
$29.95

THIS IS WHAT WE LIKE. A GOOD no nonsense title that says it all. What's inside is fourteen different tanks that get the W&G treatment. This means full color photos inside and out (but mostly inside) of a wide variety of AFVs. The list goes something like this: Matilda, White Scout Car, M2A1 & M16 halftracks, M5A1 Stuart, M4A1 Sherman, Hetzer, T-34/85, M37 HMC, T-55, M60A1/A3, M551 Sheridan, T72 and M1 Abrams.

All of the historic vehicles are fully restored and the photos are all contemporary. Each vehicle has an accompanying "Road Report" that discusses the vehicle's automotive merits (or lack thereof).

Modelers are going to dig this, as interior color questions seem to be among the most frequently asked. In our opinion, nothing improves the look of a complete interior than the tremendous color diversity of equipment found in real tanks.

Like all W&G books, this one is handsomely bound and printed on luscious coated stock that appears positively appetizing.

Mr. Windrow, may we have a sequel please?

Militärfahrzeuge of the Wehrmacht
by Kurt Rieger and Uwe Feist
Ryton Publications, 1997
275 pages, B&W with color plates
$65.00

THE TITLE HERE IS A bit deceiving. It could just mean any ol' soft skin. We were delightfully surprised when we opened the cover and found all manner of German WW2 vehicles going all the way back to the lowly bicycle!

The book starts us out with shots of horse drawn transport and these include good detail photos of the horse furniture. From there we move into two-wheelers of the motorized type, then into just about every imaginable soft skin vehicle, then armored cars and finally a terrific section of all the half track vehicles. All this is punctuated with several excellent full color illustrations.

The above description only briefly summarizes the vast selection of vehicles found between these two covers. Just about everything that rolled is shown.

Militärfahrzeuge of the Wehrmacht is part one of two and the second volume will contain track vehicles. From the look of the preview page, it will feature quite a few shot shots of Europe's many restored "runners." How cool is that?

Like the other Ryton titles this one is also a quality situation printed on heavy glossy paper. The photos are all large and quite clear. Another winner, go get it.

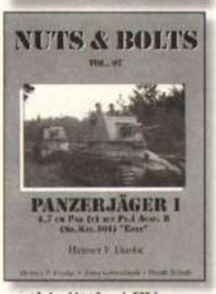
Normandie La Percee (1), Operation Goodwood
Militaria Magazine Hors-Series No. 26
by Yves Buffetaut
Histoire and Collections, 1997
82 pages, B&W with color plates
$17.95

NUMBER 26 IS THE SERIES OF soft cover special issues, this modest sized book draws on the many unpublished photos still to be found in the French archives.

As the title indicates, the book covers Operation Goodwood which was the break out from the Normandy beach head. Both Allied and German equipment is depicted and there are plenty of rare shots. There is an ample selection of Commonwealth vehicles represented here and this type of thing is often hard to come by.

All of the above is supplemented with maps and color plates. This French language book is an excellent value, too at a scant eighteen bucks.

Nuts & Bolts
Vol. 06
Kanonenwagen (Sd.Kfz 251/9)
by Detlev Terlisten
1997
45 pages, B&W throughout
$20.00 postage paid
Nuts & Bolts
Vol. 07
Panzerjäger I
by Heiner F. Duske
1997
49 pages, B&W throughout
$20.00 postage paid



We're playing catch-up here a bit, having not reviewed the last two titles from the nuts & bolts at Nuts & Bolts.

The first, Vol. 6, covers a single variant of the 251. At last, a concentrated look at just one of these buggers! This publication would, of course be an excellent companion to any modeler going after the Tamiya kit.

Vol. 07 delivers the goods on the original Panzerjager vehicle based on the chassis of the Panzer I. This is especially useful due to the fact that not a whole heck of a lot has been published on this little AFV.

Like others in the series, both books explore the subject vehicle with both war time photos and photos of contemporary survivors, along with crisp 1/35th scale plans. All the newest publications now contain several interesting improvements over the earlier ones, such as more extensive bibliographies and detailed marking information. Outstanding!

Vol. 7 has in depth captions for many of its detail shots that include letter keys to the various small details found on the main gun. This is further enhanced by photos of the Skoda gun on its carriage and this piece is also represented in the 1/35th scale plans. Existing examples of this small gun are rare, as are published photos.

All in all, a ton of stuff for a relatively small price. We are familiar with the principals of these efforts and they are a reliable group of guys. Their world-wide dispatch is quite dependable. For twenty clams you can't go wrong.

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The Small Print

The following is a new feature to MMiR. We have had many requests for reviews and features on small scale armor. We kick this off with a bit of "catch-up" and look and what has been building up in the new box over the last few months.

Well, ya know, 1/35th scale is all fine and good, but there is life beyond, or should I say below, 1/35th scale. Well, let me tell you, life is good there. For those of us who cut our armor incisors on Airfix, Adams and Bandai, small scale armor is back in a big way.

The Armoured Division

I've always been partial to 1/48th scale and The Armoured Division has reaffirmed my opinion that smaller is better. The Armoured Division has released two excellent kits in 1/48th. The First is the FAMO F3 18t Zugkraftwagen SdKfz 9. I just love the way that rolls off my tongue. This kit is white metal with three resin parts and three rubber tires. The quality of casting is excellent and the chassis is solid and well detailed. The fit of the body, hood and bed are very good with positive locators. I am very impressed with the quality of the surface detailing and how well the parts clean up. The resin parts consist of the canvas tilt and cab covers and the canvas texture is among the finest I have seen. Four different tilt combinations are possible. Nice touch. The kit is well packed with no damage to any parts and the instructions consist of written instructions, an exploded diagram and a parts list. Markings are provided for six different vehicles serving in the Afrika Korps, Italy, Russia and France. This kit is definitely a winner. The only thing you need is something to tow and The Armoured Division has thoughtfully provided that with its second kit, the VK4501 (P) Porsche Typ 101 Tiger. This little puppy is another winner. The kit is mostly resin with white metal suspension and accessory parts. Cleanup of the resin parts is virtually nil with good surface details. There are no bubbles at all. Zip. Zero. Nada. There is some minor clean up required on the white metal parts, but the overall quality and fit is superb. The Armoured Division can be reached at 27, Streatham Place, Bradwell Common, Milton Keynes, Bucks. MK13 8RH. Telephone/Fax: 01908 694935.

FROG

This is another of those famous names from the past, famous for—gaak—airplanes, but take heart, the new FROG is marketing 1/48th scale armor. These are the Bandai molds released under the FROG label. A match made in heaven, yes? The Willys MB Jeep is a nicely detailed kit with good fit and minimal parts cleanup throughout. It even comes with a trailer so you can haul chow to your Sherman crews. Several options are available, a .50 caliber gun jeep and a Jeep with the canvas top either up or down. Four crew figures are supplied, along with markings for a variety of units. Also released by FROG is the Mittlerer ZugKraftwagen 8t SdKfz. 7 KMm 11. Man, ya gotta dig those German names. This is the classic Bandai mold with good surface detail and an engine. You can build the kit with the engine panels open and the crew waiting for the FAMO 18t to come by and give them a tow. The kit comes with five crew figures and plenty of 88mm ammunition to load in the back. The tracks are vinyl with fair detail and fit easily around the suspension system. Both FROG kits are welcome additions to any 1/48th scale collection. FROG kits are available from Hobby Bounties LTD, Business and Technology Centre, Bessemer Drive, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2DX. Telephone: (0) 1438 310141.

GASO.LINE

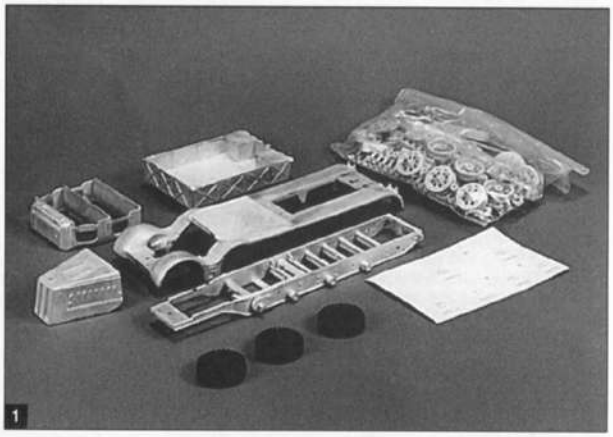
Moving slightly down the scale ladder, we have the excellent PzKpfw B2 Lance Flamme in 1/50th scale. For those of you who are linguistically challenged, this is French for Flammenwerfer, which is German for barbecue. After the German victory in the West in 1940, they found themselves in possession of a number of perfectly serviceable French tanks. The Germans converted a number of French Char B1's to flame-thrower tanks and GASO.LINE have faithfully captured this vehicle. The kit is resin with a single piece of brass for the antenna protector and a metal chain. The resin casting is absolutely first rate, the surface detail is well done and the grills on the top deck are exceptional. Parts cleanup is easy with a large casting plug on the bottom of the hull being the most difficult to remove. Fit is also good with a few minor tweaks required. The tracks are molded in upper and lower runs with the idler and sprocket links molded directly to them, which gives a good straight track run. Instructions consist of an exploded diagram and a five view drawing showing the location of markings. Decals are provided for two vehicles, an overall panzer gray vehicle belonging to the Prinz Eugen Division, and a vehicle on the Eastern Front in 2 or 3 color camouflage. The address is P.L.C.I.E., 8 Rue Baulant, 75012 Paris, France. The Fax number is 01 43 41 55 70.

FM Detail Sets

One cannot have Tigers and Panthers careening wildly across the wooden Steppes of your shelves without some thought for logistics and FM Details Sets has provided a remedy in the form of a 1/72 Opel Blitz fuel truck. The kit is molded in thirty six resin parts. Detail is sharp with a minimum of cleanup required. The instructions consist of an exploded diagram and a parts diagram. No markings are provided but painting instructions are given for an overall Panzer Gray vehicle and a vehicle in the three color scheme. The box art is in color and shows several views of the completed vehicle. Soft skins are pretty scarce on the ground and this kit is a welcome addition to any 1/72 scale collection. FM Detail Sets can be reached at 1124 Budapest, Fodor U. 88/A, Hungary. The Fax number is (36) 1 319-6203.

Ostmodels

From the Land Down Under comes a 1/72 Polish TKS tankette. If ever a piece of armor deserved the title cute, this would be it. The TKS comes with six parts. The hull, two suspension units, a muffler and a choice of a 20mm or machine gun for armament. No instructions or markings are provided, but information on the TKS is easy to come by. OSTMODELS can be reached at 8 Kingswood Crescent, Berriedale, Tasmania, Australia 7011. Telephone is (002) 492603.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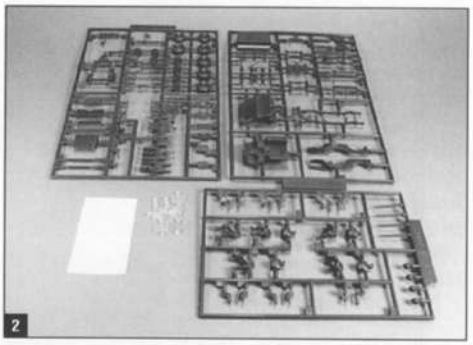
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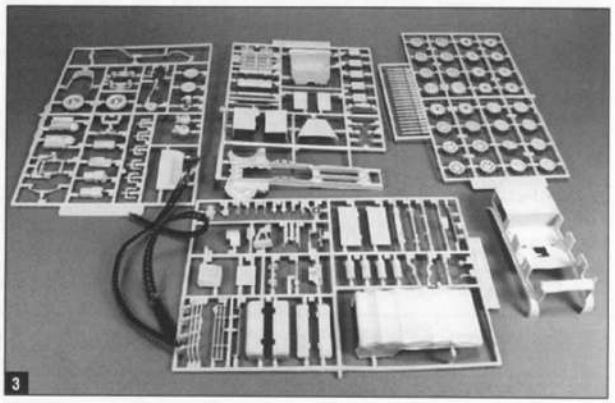
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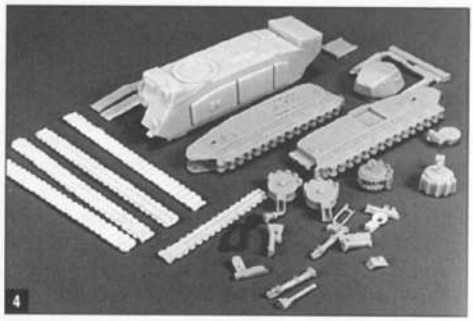
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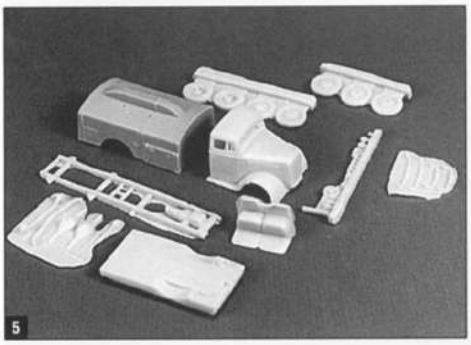
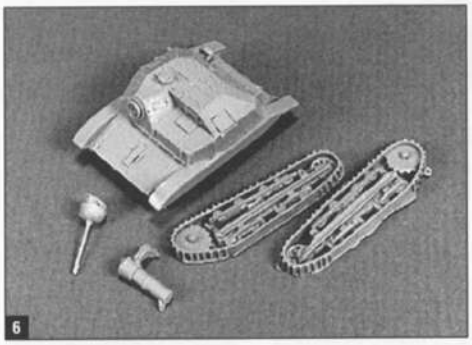
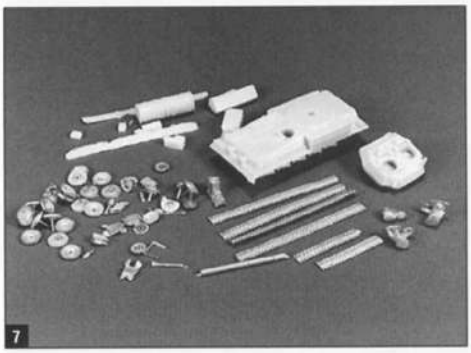
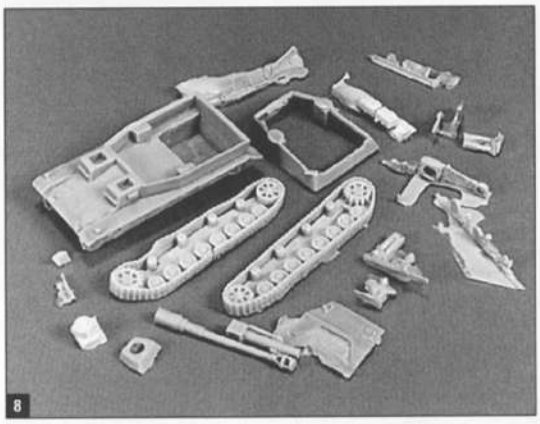
1. The massive SdKfz. 9 from Armoured Division.
2. The FROG Jeep.
3. The FROG SdKfz. 7 half track.
4. GASO.LINE's gorgeous Char B "Lance Flamme."
5. The FM Opel fuel truck in 1/72nd.
6. Ostmodels' teeny TKS tankette modelette.
7. The Salamander from Continental in 1/76th.
8. US Casts' K18 in 1/76th.









Continental Model Supply Company

Continental has an excellent range of 1/76 vehicles in its Modern AFV Collection. Recently released is the Salamander. This little puppy is a modified British Scorpion used by the BATUS OPFOR. That would be the British Army Training Unit Sheffield Opposing Force. Like the American Army at the National Training Center, the British like to dress up older tracks to look like threat vehicles. The Salamander represents a T-80 look alike. The kit consists of resin hull and turret with white metal suspension and detail parts. Detail is very good throughout and the folks from Continental Model Supply have thoughtfully provided three crewman for your painting pleasure. Instructions are clear and painting and marking information is provided. Continental Model Supply Company can be contacted at 36 Gray Gardens, Rainham, Essex, RM13 7NH England.

US Casts

Continuing in 1/76 scale, we have a German K-18 tank killer based on a Mark IV chassis. Two of these saw successful service on the Eastern Front in World War II but the type never went into series production. The kit is resin and requires a little extra work to clean up and build. There are air bubbles in a few inconvenient places, but they can be filled easily with white glue to preserve the surrounding surface detail. Instructions are basic and additional references will be required to complete the model. US Casts can be reached at PO Box 3229, Santa Cruz, California 95063. Telephone (408) 425-8437 (evenings).

Rounding out the goodies this time around are accessories from Stencilit and Eduard/Precision Parts. Stencilit has produced a range of brass stencils in 1/76 scale to give your vehicle markings that "painted on" look. Now hitting the streets are WW II Soviet and WW II USA markings. I have used their German WW II markings set and was impressed with the results. Contact them at SSI PO Box 1411, Glasgow G46 7DF Scotland. Eduard continues to provide the modeler with high quality photo etch details. In 1/48 scale, we have the detail sets for the FROG/Fuman M4A3 Sherman and Willys Jeep MB. In 1/72, Eduard provides sets for the Cooperativa SU-100, T-34/85 and BM-13 Katiusha. These detail sets are first rate and will definitely lift your model out of the ordinary.

—Glen Broman

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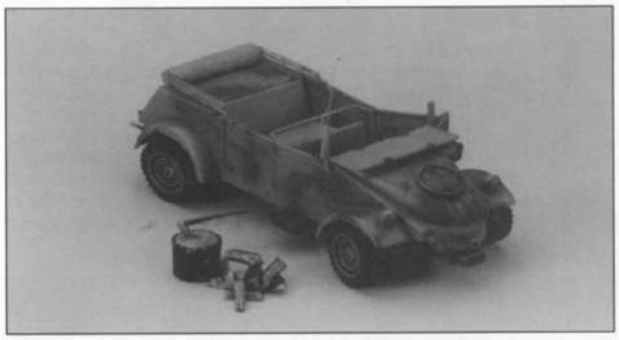

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Meet me in St. Louie, Part Touie

We're back in the arched city for more fun at MasterCon 6

It was with more than a little surprise that we found ourselves invited back to the VLS MasterCon this September past. We think the key reason can be found in the phase "arrested but not convicted." And so Labor Day weekend found us back at the venerable Holiday Inn for MasterCon 6. Now when you first arrive at this show, it looks to be no more than your average regional, but it's when you see the type of models that are present that you know you're in for a treat.

This year's crop was an especially worthy bunch, we thought we saw just a few little 'ol models like a 1/16th Tarawa diorama featuring an LVT, a scratch built GPA (amphibious jeep) in 120mm scale and a scratch built DORA gun in 1/35th scale (yeah, that DORA). Yep, just your average group of completely in-sane individuals.

Don't forget: this is balloted competition with the emphasis on F-U-N. Pen lights and dental mirrors can result in a serious wedgie or worse the dreaded atomic wedgie. It's a funny thing though—in our opinion, most of the work would certainly stand up to the scrutiny anyway!

Let us recount just a teeny anecdote that will give you some idea of just how different a show that this is. There was a gentleman in attendance from Taiwan. He had scratch-built a stunning M60 bridge layer that was somewhat tucked away in a darker corner of the display room. We noticed it and strolled over to take a closer look. After recovering from our temporary paralysis, we called it to the attention of the MC of the event, Dr. Joe Porter. Joe, also somewhat stunned (we guess he's used to it), then proceeded to call over most of the individuals in the hall at that time. He then introduced the modeler to the crowd (he was standing nearby with a grin that was actually bigger that his entire face) who then articulated the bridge assembly for us. The small crowd then erupted in spontaneous applause. Talk about gratification.

Wrapped around the competition are the usual and useful how-to seminars, the VIP bull session, and the Saturday awards banquet.

Also not to be missed is a trip to the VLS warehouse, which is thrown open to receive the geekhood and their check books. As usual, lavish discounts abound for the MasterCon attendees and this year there was a great little display of WW2 reenactors with all their attendant weapons, vehicles and gear. A lot of guys take advantage of the discounts to make their big purchases for the year (like airbrushes) and this can be just about worth the trip right there.

In addition to the events at the hotel and warehouse, there is regular shuttle service to Miniature World. Now Miniature World is actually considerably more significant that it sounds. What you have here is a spectacular selection of models and dioramas that not only reflect the history of the events they depict, but also a history of the hobby itself. Remember those incredible boxed dioramas shown in Shep Paine's how-to books? Well, here they are in all their splendor. The boxed dios are housed in a special darkened hall (at least one modeler is still there with his faced pushed up against the glass whimpering "how did he do that..."). This is literally the tip of the iceberg as the museum is several thousand square feet of space roughly divided by historical context.

Also present are the collected works Lewis Pruneau and Bob Letterman whose large footprint dioramas are never done justice in photos. Lewis' latest, a 1/96th scale dio of the battleship Pennsylvania sunk in dry-dock at Oahu pretty much left us speechless (we coulda done a diorama like this, but we just... never got around to it—OK?).

Some of the other notables are a selection of the original Francois Verlinden dioramas, an immense selection of 120mm dioramas (Andy Meyers' scratch-built M1A1 to mention only one) and at least one of the dios featured in the old Monogram diorama sheets. Neato, neato, neato.

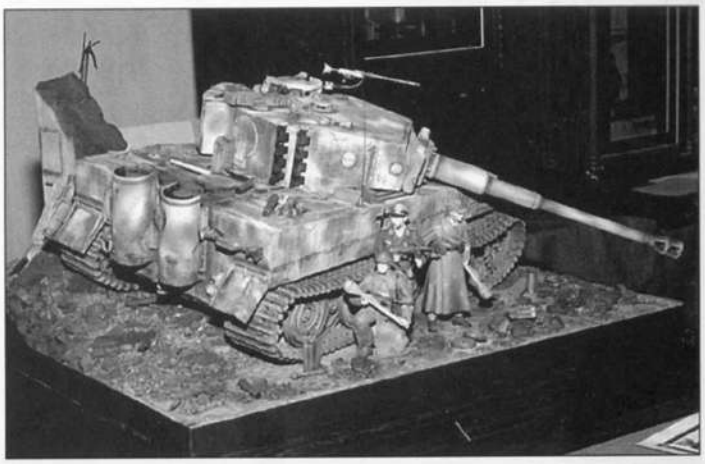
Miniature World is the kind of place you can linger for hours and we'd imagine they'd have to kick more than a few people out at closing time (remember: arrested, but not convicted). The front entrance of the museum is a nicely stocked little hobby shop with a good selection of books and kits, too.

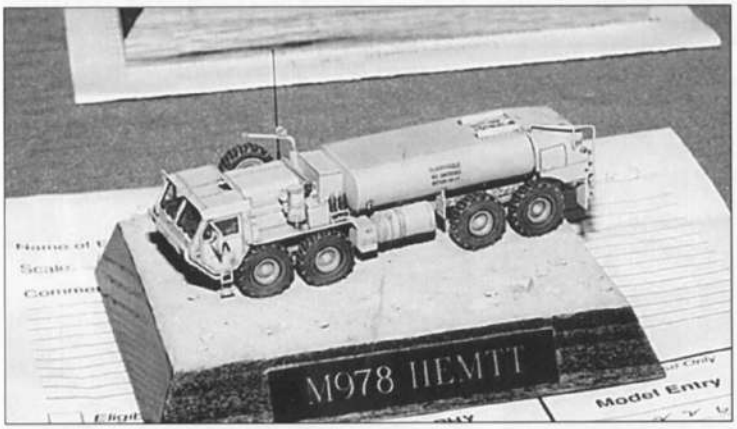
Miniature World is smack dab in the middle of St. Charles Missouri, a small town nestled along the banks of the Missouri river. The town itself is sort of a living historical village with dozens and dozens of immaculately restored nineteen century buildings. This includes tons of boutiques and restaurants for the Mrs. to get lost in for the afternoon. All in all a super cool place.

So consider spending your next labor day in St. Louie, the show does break-up by noon on Sunday and you have all of the city and its environs to explore for the remainder of the long weekend. The wonderfully renovated St. Louis central train station has been turned into an immense outdoor shopping, bar and restaurant complex complete with hotel. This is accessible from the airport by Metro and the happening downtown area is also on the same line. What more could you ask for?

For more information on the 1998 event, contact The VLS Corp., at 811 Lone Star Drive, O'Fallon, MO 63366. 314-281-5700.

Far left: attendees were greeted by this ultra realistic 1:1 figure of MasterCon organizer Joe Porter. The figure depicts Joe as a sergeant in the U.S. Army circa 1983. It was painted using Humbrol enamels. Left: one of the more subtle pieces on display, Ken Guntin's "Charlie's Sampan." Very effective, even with no figures. Below left: "Price check on aisle three!" Merchandise escaping rapidly from the VLS warehouse. Tom Gerringer on keyboards. Notice the full cart on the far right of the photo. Below: one of many 120mm dioramas, this one is by Ed Harm and it took home a gold medal.

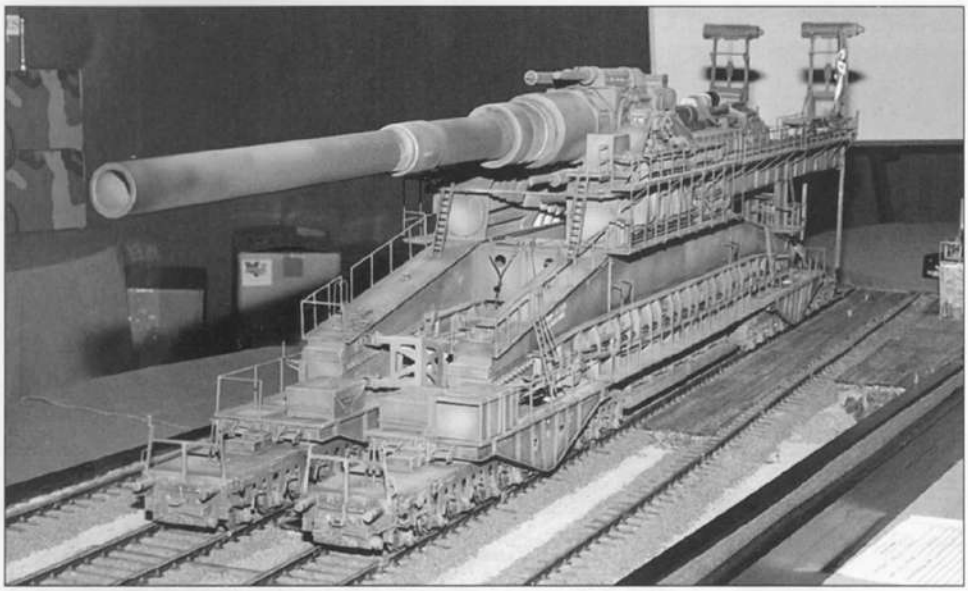


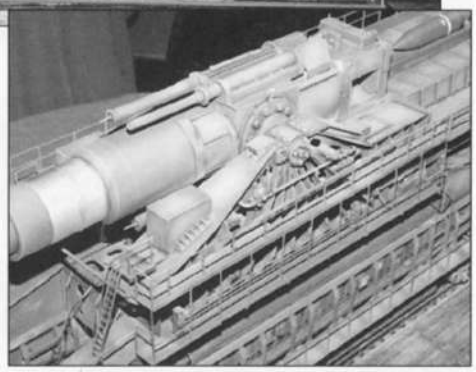


Above left: Duane Pfister's 120mm GPA Amphibian was very loosely based on the VP 120mm jeep. A ton of scratchbuilding got him a Gold. Above right: Another of the larger 1/16th scale dios. An interesting footprint for such a large subject. This model is by Greg Cihlar and it won a Gold medal in large scale dioramas. Above left: also by the Gregster, this time it's wee bit smaller in 1/35th scale. A crap load of Warriors and VP figures mull around a detailed Tamiya Tiger I. Above right: "Nice Shot Comrade" is a well-done little scene by David Vickers featuring the Italeri Elephant, the MB Ferdinand conversion and a kick-ass paint job. Left: big things do come in small packages, Ken Guntin souped up the little Roco HEMTT for a bronze. Below left: the home of Miniature World in historical St. Charles. The entrance is on the left, but the facility encompasses all seven of the windows just above the entrance. Below right: just one of the halls inside filled with cased dioramas and models.

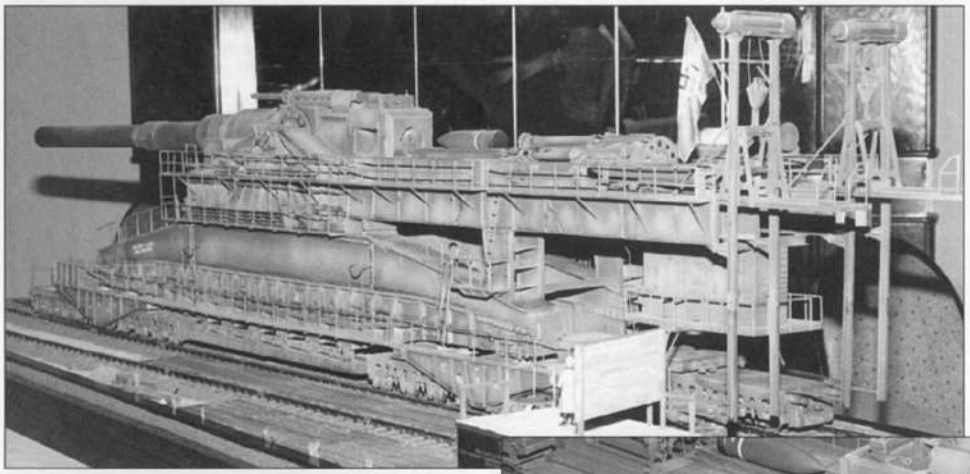
Dear DORA

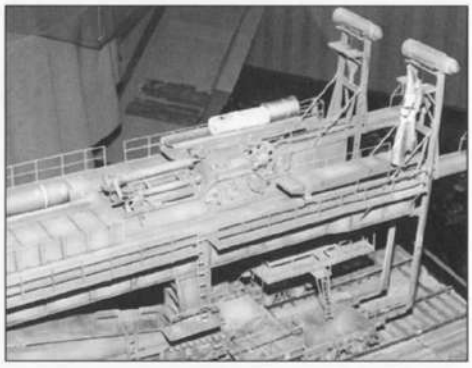
Just your average day at the office

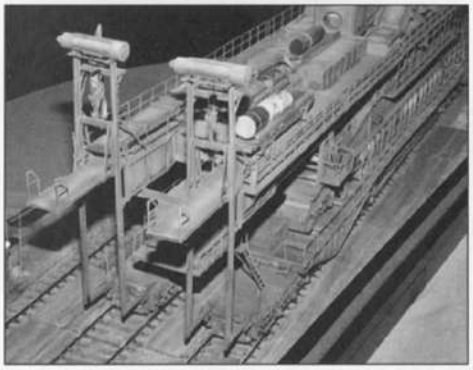


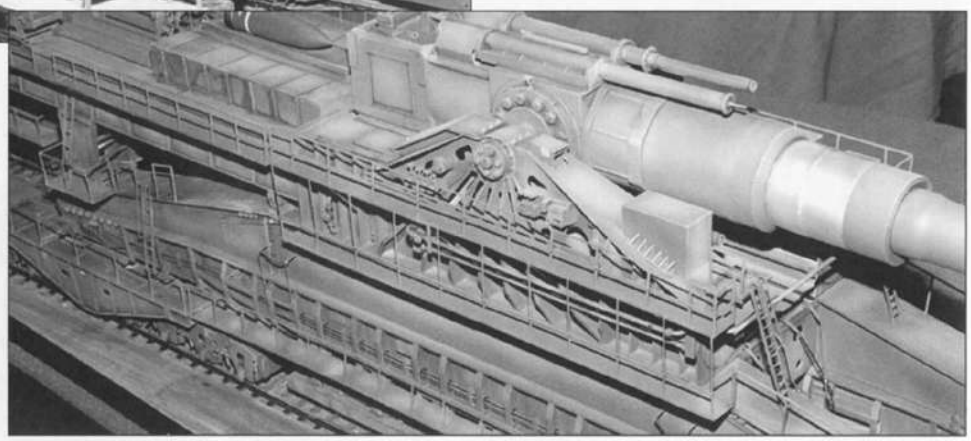


We like to introduce you to Bob Waltman and his friend DORA. Bob got to know DORA over a period of two years and his efforts won him Best Armor, Category Gold, People's Choice, Grand Master and Grand Poobah at MasterCon 6—plus a few awards they're still trying to make up. The massive model (understatement o' the century) is mostly styrene and Bob is reported to now own stock in Evergreen Scale Plastics. Smaller parts are brass and the barrel was turned from acrylic stock. This thing's got to be released in resin any day, right? We'll just shut up and let you look at the photos. Maybe we can get Bob to give us a fuller report in the not too distant future.









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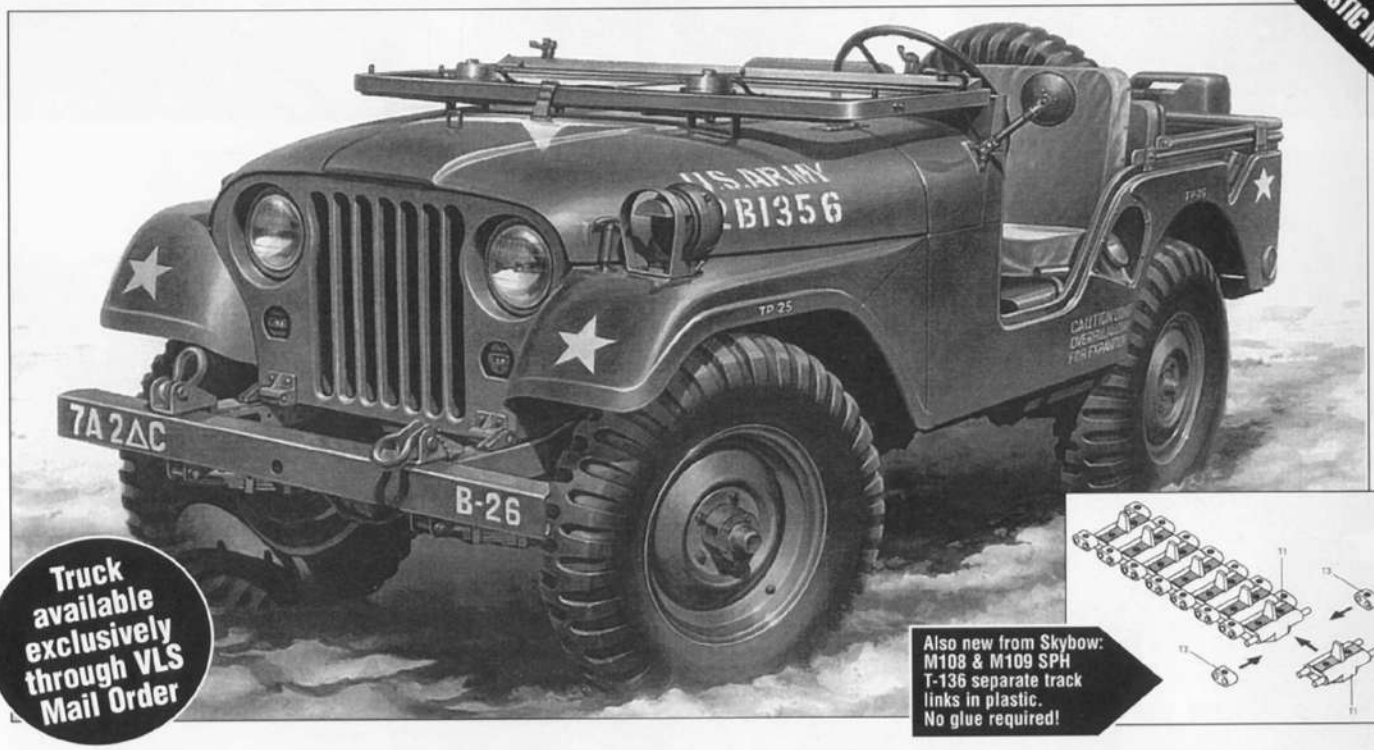

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Kleine Panzer on Steroids:

THE ALAN PANZER I F

The Panzer I did not acquit itself well in the Polish campaign. Whenever it came up against determined resistance, the little tanks were knocked out. Its light armor was susceptible to guns as small as 20mm and a rethink of the whole design was called for. Two vehicles resulted from this, the light recon tank Pzl C (40 built); and the subject of this review, the Pzl F (30 built). Who knows what the "D" and "E" were.

The "F" model was a heavily armored (80mm), slow (25kmh), machine gun armed infantry support tank, comparable to the Matilda I. Like the Matilda, it was impervious to the 37-47mm antitank guns of the period. Like the Matilda, it was unable to fight another tank, because of its rifle caliber machine gun armament. The genus was an evolutionary dead end, but some were built and saw combat. (One ended up in Kubinka and I'm sure Alan used it to pattern this kit.)

The Kit

This kit is from Alan, of St. Petersburg, Russia. An earlier kit of the SU-76 by this company was universally panned for its heavy sprues and clunky detail, but it's obvious that these guys have paid attention. This model is a far cry from the SU; this is a fine effort, with very good detail where it's called for. Although the sprues are still hefty, the attachment points for the parts are not. Fit was excellent in most of the kit and easily remedied where it wasn't.

You all know that a hallmark of Eastern European kits is the multipart hull. This can be difficult; screw up the alignment, and you can have serious problems. Not on this one. This is the best hull of this type that I've ever seen. Every part mates to every other part (and there are ten parts to the hull) exactly and squarely. An example is the glacis, part 9. It needs a very slight angle at the back to mate up to the hull sides, and the fit is dead on. The plate with the driver's visor, part 8, drops on perfectly. I was very favorably impressed.

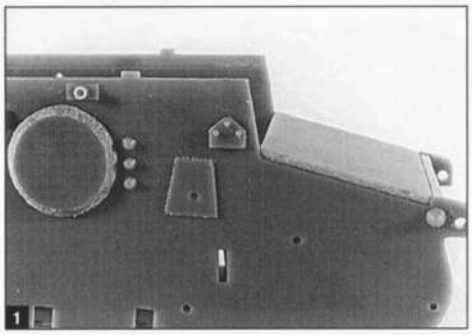
Step one starts off kind of tricky, though. The illustration would have you put the exhaust guard, part 35, up on the angled part of part 4, the rear hull plate. Build the exhaust system and test fit, and you'll see that 35 goes down on the flat part of 4, fitting like a glove onto the exhaust. Paint 4 and 35 before you put on part 5, which is, I guess, the rear rear hull plate. There's just room, by the way, to fit the exhaust after all the paint, so paint it separately and set it aside.

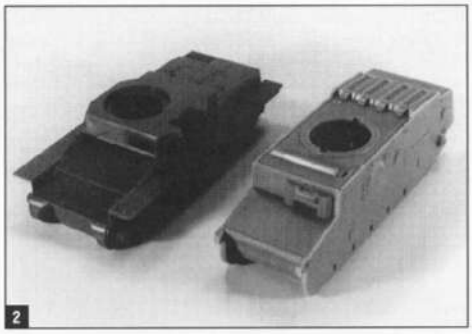
The hull hatches are completely detailed on the inside and are provided with operable hinges. There's no detail on the inside of the hull, though, so I closed 'em up. Same with the turret hatch, although it has no working hinge.

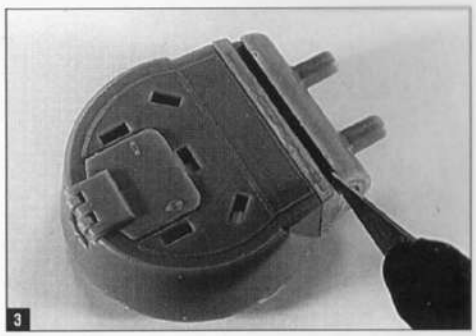
Being a complete redesign, the "F" used a different suspension, the "Schachtellaufwerk" or interleaved type, like a Tiger. (Indeed, with its square hull, wide tracks, and this suspension, it resembles more than anything a little Tiger; perhaps a Tiger cub?) Here in the suspension the first fit problem cropped up: the drive sprocket mount's pins (parts 12) didn't fit the holes in the hull. It was simple to open one up into a slot, and that fixed that.

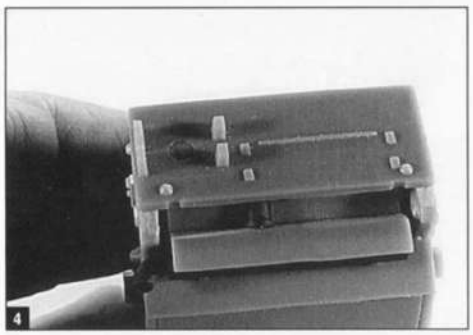
The openings for the torsion bar arms in the hull each needed just a touch with a file, and care must be taken to get all the arms to properly line up. The idler mount adjusters (parts 18) are shown in the plans to have a pin on the back to locate to a hole in the hull. There's no pin on the part, so just glue it onto the back of the idler mount so as to cover the hole in the hull. Put on the bump stops, parts 14, and the shock absorbers, parts 37, the mounts, and 13, the shocks. Notice how torsion bar arms (15) fit the bottom of the shocks. Nice. The wheels go on next; check out the fine weld seams on them, and on the shock absorber mounts.

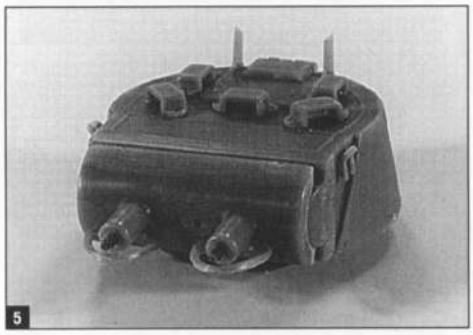
Before putting on the drive sprockets, check the fit of the track shoes against them. I didn't, and it caused the most grief involved in the kit. (As long as I've been doing this, you'd think I'd learn, but nooooo!) Some hefty sanding has to be done on the teeth to get the shoes to fit down on them. The tracks are spectacular, very delicately cast with beautiful open guide horns, and not a knockout mark one. The delicate casting means that extra

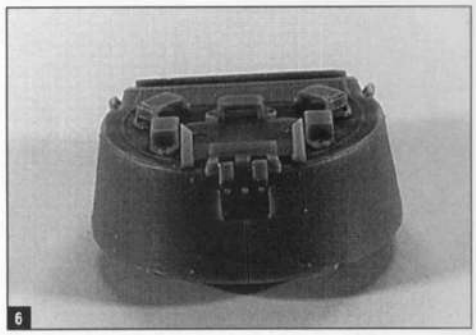


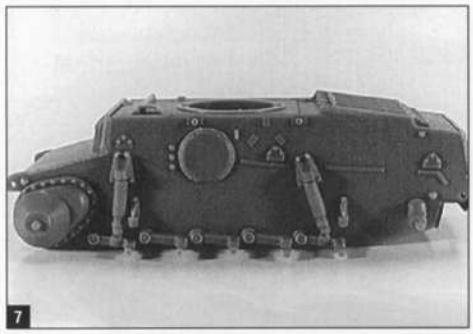


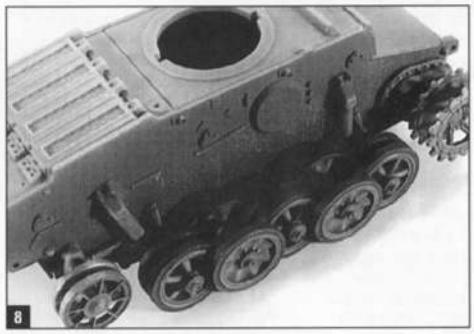


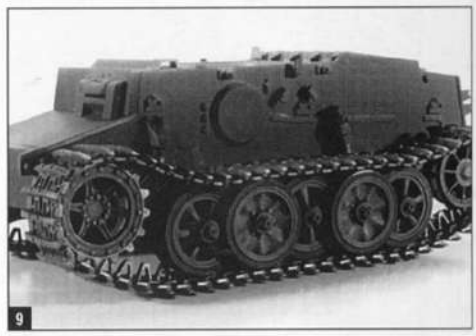


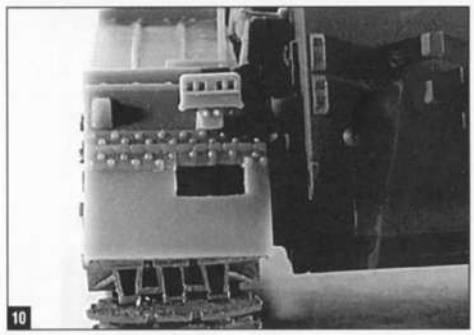












1. The glacis needs a slight angle to fit the hull sides, and it is done to perfection. Notice also the weld seams on the shock mount just in front of the hatch. 2. The "F" was a major redesign of the Panzer I. On the left is the 'regular' Pz I hull; on the right the "F" hull. 3. As built per the instructions, you can see down through the mantlet. To stop this, I put a piece of Plastruct in between the horns of part 42; the knife blade points to the dark gray Plastruct. 4. Here's the hull rear with the rear rear plate, part 5, in place over the parts of Step 1. The 'under' stuff must be painted before adding this plate. 5. The finished turret, front view: note the darker colored gun muzzles from my spares and the somewhat heavy periscope guards. 6. The finished turret, rear view: the hatch rests, those little thingies sticking up on each side of the hinge, are rotated ninety degrees from the instructions. 7. Left side, suspension. The torsion bar arms, shocks, bump stops, idler mount, and drive sprocket mount are all on. 8. The Schachtellaufwerk, or interleaved suspension, before the tracks. 9. Right side with the tracks on: the tracks are especially nice, with open guide horns. 10. The fenders go on after the tracks; they're a good fit, even with the small clearance between track and fender. On the left fender is the Tamiya convoy light with its superior detail. Note the square opening that must be cut in the fender; the other side gets a round one to fit the taillight.

care must be taken to get them off the sprues. I started with a sprue cutter, then went to a new blade in my knife, but still broke a shoe here and there. The problem is the one attachment that goes to the center.

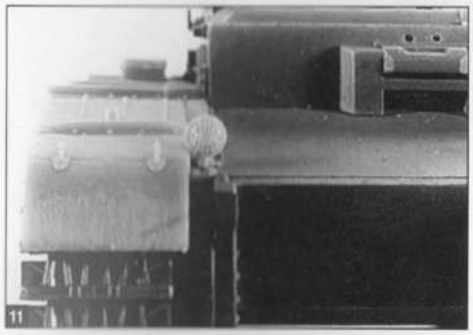
The casting is quite thin here and it seemed that I was breaking too many, not knowing how many extras there were. (Turns out there were plenty, about twenty-five.) Then I hit on the method: that nasty little rotary saw blade for the Dremel. This cuts off that attachment with no stress on the shoe (it'll also cut off anything else that gets in its way). The other two can then be cut with a sprue cutter with no damage to the shoe. Sanding all the shoes clean took a couple hours, though.

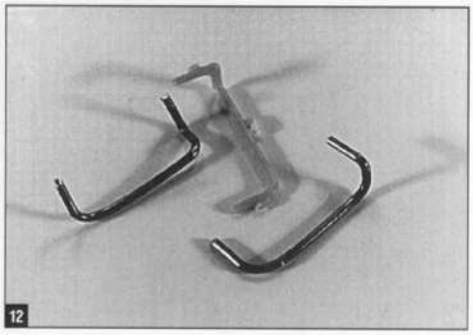
The lower hull and suspension has to be painted before the tracks go on, of course. Although the box art shows a camouflage scheme of red brown over dark yellow, I was unable to find a photo of this thing in anything other than gray. So gray it was, my own mix of Pactra colors to get Panzer gray, drybrushed with Pactra medium gray. The tracks were sprayed with Pactra hull red, then drybrushed inside and outside with Pactra gun metal. Don't skip the inside; more than you think shows, including the guide horns through the idler!

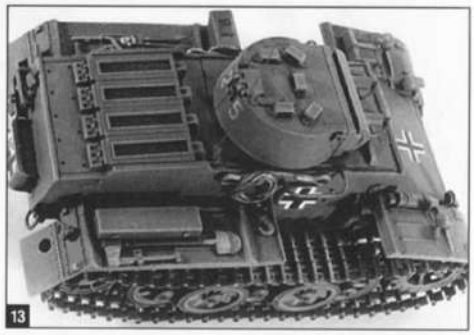
Now the fenders can go on, after painting the undersides gray. There was very little clearance at the front between track and fender. Shots of these vehicles in use all show the hinged part missing. If I were to do this over, I'd cut that part off. Photos of the Cromwell resin kit of this beast show much less curve on the hinged part, so who knows. The Kubinka one doesn't have its hinged parts. There wasn't much room at the rear, either. Don't forget to cut the round hole in the right rear fender and the square hole in the left.

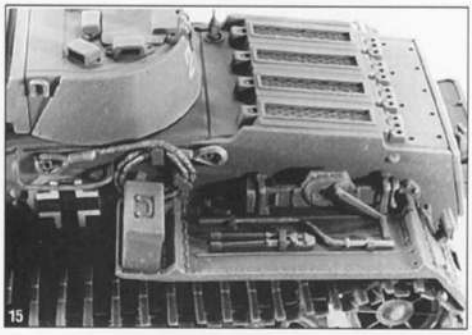
The fenders are loaded with all kinds of stuff, no wonder considering the lack of space inside. Here I made some substitutions, all from Tamiya's PzIV accessory set. First was the convoy light on the left rear fender. The Tamiya one is more crisply molded, and has bolt detail on the mount. The horn/siren was also exchanged, because of superior molding. The fire extinguisher was also exchanged, not because it was much better, but because the Russian one's mold attachments made it very difficult to clean up. The shovel broke during removal, and the pry bar from Tamiya was nicer. Lastly, I used the Tamiya tow cable ends after shortening them; again, better detail. The tow cables were made of ship rigging line.

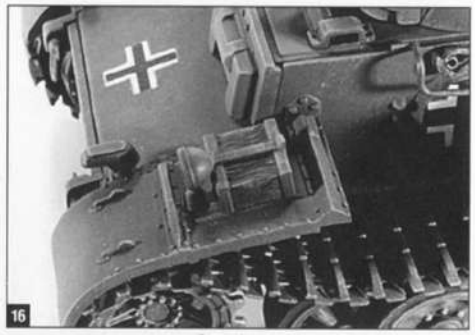
A couple more things also were changed, but not because of detail. There are hand rails (parts 53 & 54) that go on the hull sides above the hatches. I knew they'd be trouble to get off the sprues, and sure enough I broke one. Rather than try to glue it back together and then break it again cleaning it up, I just used the good one for a pattern and bent a couple up out of .030 wire. Don't put these on until

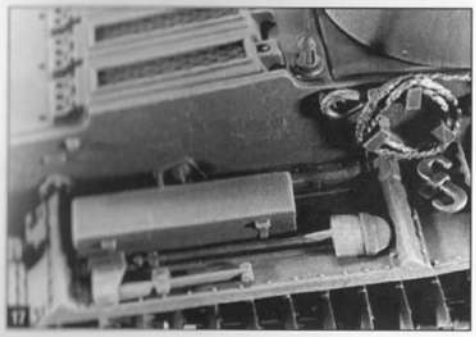












11. The right front fender; the siren/horn was changed for one from the Tamiya accessory set. 12. One of the hand rails, part 54, was a victim of the sprue cutter. Trying to glue this kind of fine plastic is hopeless, so I used the survivor as a pattern, and bent replacements from .030 copper wire. 13. Overhead view, rear. I'm sure that the photoetched manufacturers will have engine deck grills on the market in no time to replace the cast in ones. The grills were painted black, then drybrushed with the base color. 14. The turret top; it has very nice fine weld beads. The driver was provided with the visor, shown here, and a periscope on the left. It must have been quite claustrophobic. 15. Tool suite, left rear fender. These are all Alan, but the tow cable ends are Tamiya, and the 'cable' ship rigging line. 16. Left front fender detail. The jack block had the 'wood' grain carved in it by an X-acto. 17. Tool suite, right rear fender. The shovel is Tamiya.

after you wind the tow cable around their mounts (parts 55, also very nicely done).

Now it's on to the turret. I didn't care much for the machine gun barrels, so I used a couple from my spares drilled out. Test fitting the mantlet showed that it was possible to see down through it from the top. At the cost of eliminating the elevation capability, I glued some Plastruct in between the 'horns' of part 42, and that solved the problem.

The rest of the turret was pretty much a straight build. I covered the periscope openings on the inside of the turret with sheet styrene to avoid any light leaks, then painted the openings black before adding the guards. Strangely, there are no periscopes provided; again, if I were building this again I'd add some here and to the hull. The periscope guards have good fastener detail, but are a bit heavy. I'm sure this will be rectified by a photoetched sheet.

Notice that the instructions would have you install the hatch rests, parts 46 and 47, sideways. They should be rotated 90°, so that the low sides of the angled tops face each other (see page 26 of Encyclopedia of German Tanks of WWII; the same photo is in Zaloga's The Eastern Front, page 24).

Paint and markings

The finished vehicle was sprayed with my Panzer gray mix, and drybrushed again with medium gray. The engine deck grills were painted black, then drybrushed with the base color to pick out the grill work. (This will be another part of the soon to come photoetched sheet, I'm sure.) Tools and lights were painted separately and then added after drybrushing.

I've had excellent experiences with Russian decals, but these, from "Anna & Co." also of St. Petersburg, were a disappointment. Carrier film showed around everything after using Solva-set and spraying with clear flat. There was nothing to do but edge each decal with the base color, not too bad on the crosses, but excruciating on the numbers on the turret rear. At one point in the middle of this, I began to get light headed; then I realized that I'd just been holding my breath for about five minutes! I may've been able to avoid the whole problem by spraying with gloss first. Anyhow I marked the tank like the one in the photos I referenced above, including an odd Balkankreuz on the glacis.

Conclusion

Checking the finished model against Encyclopedia of Tanks showed it to be within a scale inch in every dimension, which is as good as anything I've ever measured. Some of the smaller detail parts should be changed, but the Tamiya accessory kit has everything you need. Since these kits aren't all that expensive, you can afford to pick up the Tamiya stuff and still come in at about thirty bucks, a hell of a lot better than the Cromwell kit's price of $105 in this country.

All in all, this is a terrific little kit. After building this one, I'm looking forward to building their PzII C I've had on my shelf, and really looking forward to the BA-6 they show on the side of the box!

—Joe Morgan

MMiR RECCE

Alan Panzer II Ausf. F. Kit number 5007. Suggested retail $24.98.

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Chamberlain, Peter, Doyle, Hilary, Jentz, Thomas L., *Encyclopedia of German Tanks of World War Two (revised edition)*, Arms and Armour Press, London, 1993.

Crow, Duncan, and Icks, Robert J., *Encyclopedia of Tanks*, Chartwell, Secaucus, NJ, 1975.

Zaloga, Steven J. and Grandsen, James, *The Eastern Front, Armour Camouflage and Markings, 1941 to 1945*, Arms and Armour Press, London, 1983.

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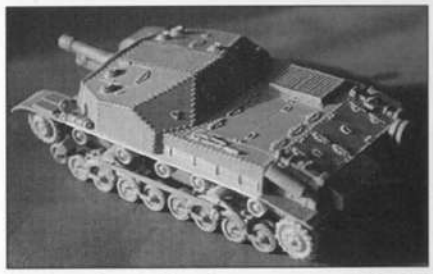

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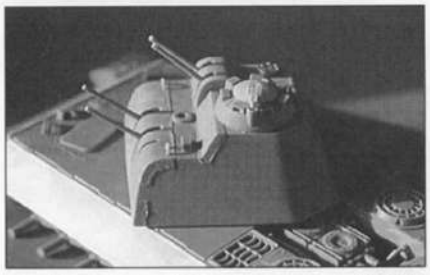

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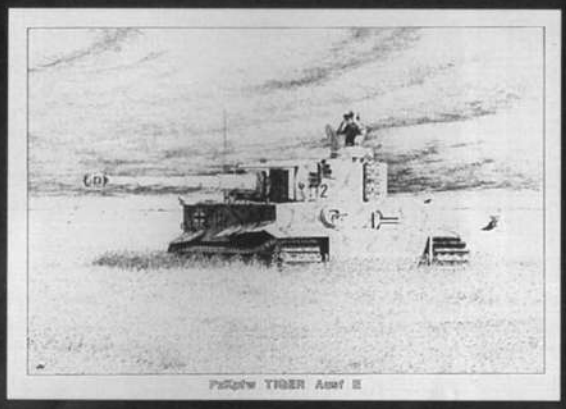

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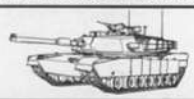

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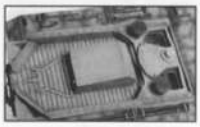

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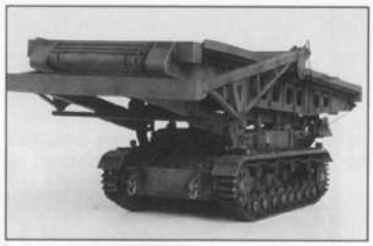

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Crackin' Cromwell

TAMIYA GOES BRITISH WITH A STYRENE BEAUTY

Bravo British tanks I say! Now, I must confess right up front that I'm not the world's biggest British armor freak. But the reason I wrote this is because you're going to want to built this kit and count your self amongst the converted. But first, the obligatory history lesson.

Class!!!

The Cromwell is one of the high points of a long and rather excruciating journey that the Brits took to find a capable MBT during WW2. The so-called "Cruiser" tanks being developed in the UK at that time were all based on the internal spring Christie type suspension. This utilizes sprung suspension arms sandwiched between the outer and inner hulls. The Cromwell's development was centered around the excellent Merlin engine used in the Spitfire and Hurricane fighter airplanes (ugh). For its use in a tank this new 600hp power pack was renamed Meteor. Production problems kept the Meteor out of the Cromwell for about a year, but production went ahead anyway. The result was the Cromwell's close cousin, the A27L Centaur.

The Meteor engined Cromwell was designated A27M and was produced in six different hull types; A through D and F (E was an internal tranny mod), although only D and F were common. The difference in all the hulls is primarily centered around the crew hatches and the engine deck. The most significant difference between D and F hulls is the starboard side crew hatch. The D hull had a flip open two-piece hatch. And, well... it seems that you couldn't traverse the turret with it open. How embarrassing! The F had the nifty bump out type side hatches on both sides, eliminating this problem. (I believe there was also a field kit that would modify the hatch to flip shut as the turret went around—just don't be in the way when it happens.)

I think the Tamiya kit is the D hull (although it could be a C).

And on to the kit

Tamiya, how do I love thee? Let me count the sprues... O.K., O.K., it does get to be a bit much just constantly lavishing praise on these guys. It's not that I go out of my way to do it, it's just that they make it so damn easy to do. This kit is nice. One more time: This kit is nice. So nice, in fact that I just might say it's the best kit they have ever done to date.

Now, why a Cromwell you may ask? Tamiya's last new release of a Brit tank was the Challenger way back in the days of 35134. Before that it was the Crocodile back in 35100. Both kits were subsequently re-released, the Croc fairly recently as the gun tank. But it's been a long stretch for the British Empire in plastic from Japan.

Tamiya has an especially close relationship with the Tank Museum at Bovington Camp in England, even having a hall named after them (the result of a rather substantial donation they say).

So maybe it was their way of saying "thanks" or they may actually be listening to the less numerous, but no less important, UK armor fringe.

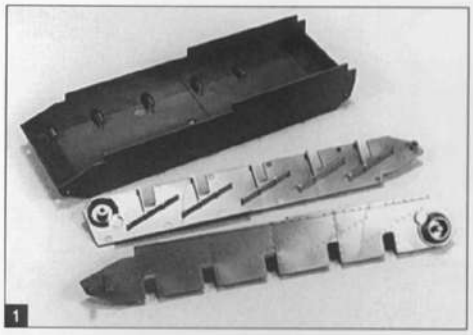
Regardless of the reasons, Tamiya no doubt enjoyed unlimited access to all of Bovington's records, drawings, photos and of course, actual Cromwell's. It is really reflected in the model, which is festooned with details in every nook and cranny—even in places where you can't see them.

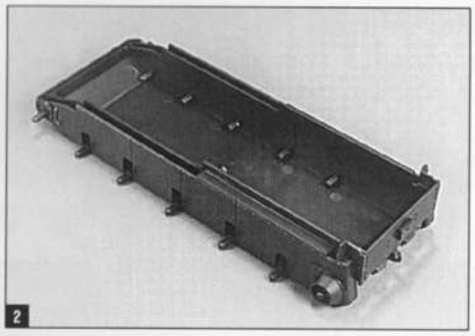
Construction starts out with the hull and Tamiya went ahead and replicated the double hull structure of the real tank. You add two large panels along the side of the tank to create this. The add-on parts are beautifully detailed with rolled steel texture and recessed rivets. This adds more plastic to the kit, but the effect is cracking good.

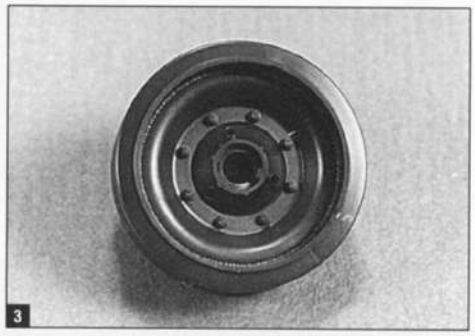
The suspension arms have those cool little locating pins to keep everything straight. The roadwheels and suspension gear are detailed way beyond the point of appreciation with the naked eye. The roadwheels themselves have breathtaking weld-bead detail and include the properly shaped and detailed piercings around the radius of the hub. All the gear here is of the poly cap type, as usual.

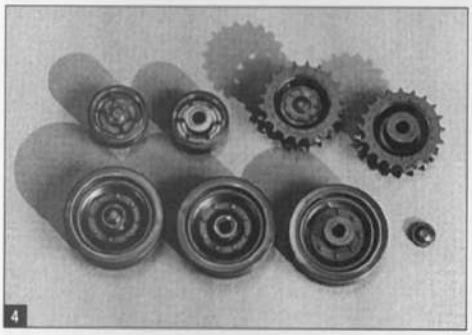
Upper hull construction is quite simple and is basically limited to detailing the one large part provided. Tamiya has given an unspoken nod to the after market crowd and left the engine access doors wide open.

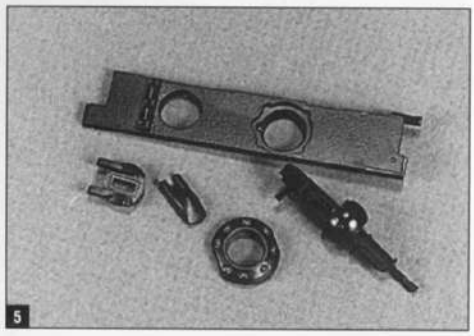
You do get the option of creating a converted Centaur (most were re-engined with the Meteor) by adding the tell-tale plugs for the internal track

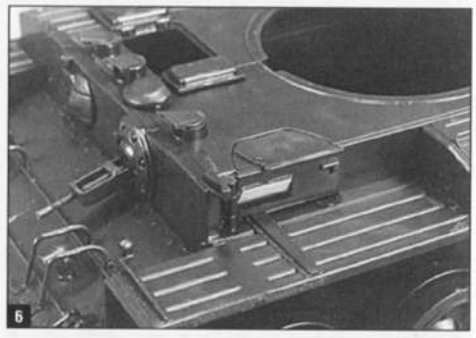


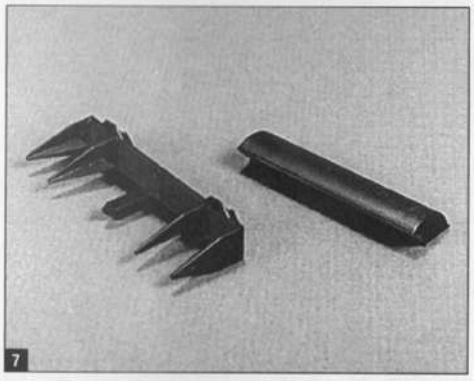


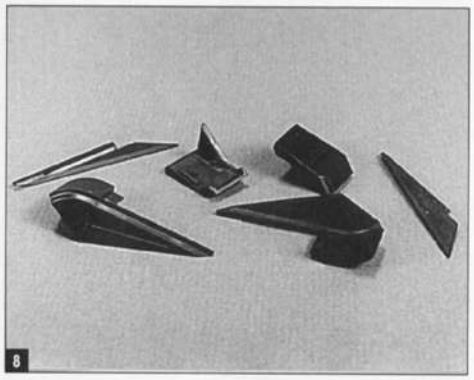


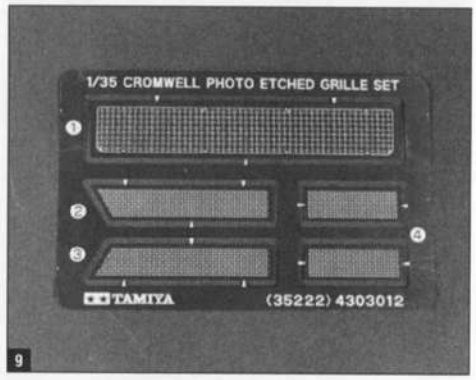












tensioning system on the front glacis plate. A weird hockey stick looking tool is added to the rear for this feature. Other options are a "Normandy Cowl" (sort of a small wading trunk) and a Cullin Hedgerow cutter. Fit and finish was outstanding throughout.

The only parts I added to this otherwise box-stock model were three brackets for the tow cable on the right side. I fashioned them from a photo-etched fret.

Stop meshing around

Woven mesh is provided for the screen at the very back of the tank and the instructions indicate its size and placement in a styrene frame. I opted for the addition of Tamiya's one etched accessory set for this kit, which is composed of all the tank's screens including this large one.

All the parts are etched in a bright silver material and I was impressed with the larger piece's woven appearance. The other parts provided go between the side cowlings on the engine deck. They are difficult to see when the model is finished, but you'll love having them there when the jerky-boy judges pull out their pen lights.

The front and rear fender assemblies fit against the upper hull perfectly. This is very important because you'll need to leave these off for painting. After I finished all the upper hull detailing, I left the hull broken down into these parts, the upper hull and the wheels.

Turret? Ta!

The turret includes a fully detailed gun breech assembly—and no big nut and bolt this time! The two turret halves are mated with five armored panels that represent the rolled steel exterior. These are so finely textured that it's almost a shame to paint them.

Watch out for these parts. The fit is very good, but they all must be installed at once and care must be taken not to leave any fine gaps between the panels. These gaps won't become evident until the tank is painted, which can ruin your whole day.

Tamiya supplied a ton more yummy detail for the turret, like a cast commander's hatch ring complete with casting numbers, leather looking pads for all the hatch interiors (coincidentally a handy way to hide a knock-out mark) and a clear lens for the side searchlight. This detailing frenzy even extends to the commander's sighting devices and the antenna mount, which are some of the thinnest I've seen in plastic.

A couple of small gripes before I continue (of course). Like many of the newer kits, the tow cable heads are open on the back side to accommodate the provided string. This is all well and good, but I always have a tough time getting these to lay flat. Drilling out a cable head is not too tough. I also wish that some sort of sleeve was provided for the twin cables. Keeping them together during painting was fiddly.

The most significant omission on the kit that I could find (besides few bolt heads) was the absence of the armored electrical conduits on both the hull and the turret. These appear everywhere there is some sort of exterior cord, like the front marker lights and the searchlight. They're pretty small and relatively tough to scratch build. But, if this is the worst thing I've got to say...

A spot of paint, Guv?

I painted my Cromwell an overall Khaki type color. Tamiya suggests a mixture of a few of its paints to create a green color, but I always thought that Brit tanks were more of an Bronzy OD shade.

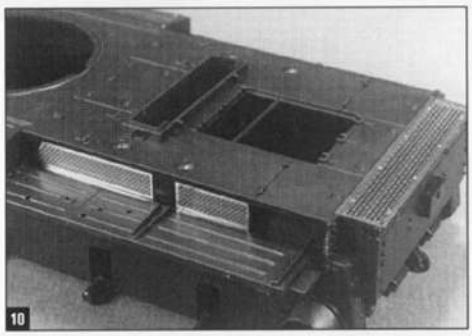
I used Polly-Scale OD for this, sprayed over a dark green base coat. This was allowed to show through in places, especially on the lower hull. The road wheels were painted using a drafting template.

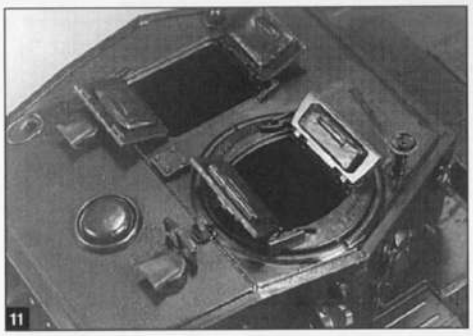
All the tools were carefully painted on the model. I like to use a small scrap of typing paper to slip under the tools to keep the surface below protected. Don't forget that British fire extinguishers (two on each fender) were painted a medium green color with bright bronze heads. Tamiya recommends XF-5 and XF-12 respectively.

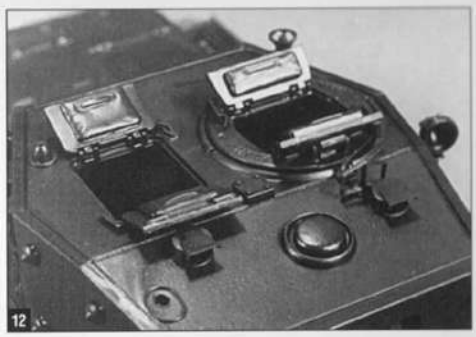
I must confess to a certain amount of shame in not using the Tamiya decals. They are beautifully and perfectly printed, but I always yearn for the speedy characteristics of dry transfers. Using the two available VP sheets, I was able to duplicate one of the suggested schemes of the 1st Polish armored division. I also added a small stencil marking on the turret and on the First Aid box on the back hull panel.

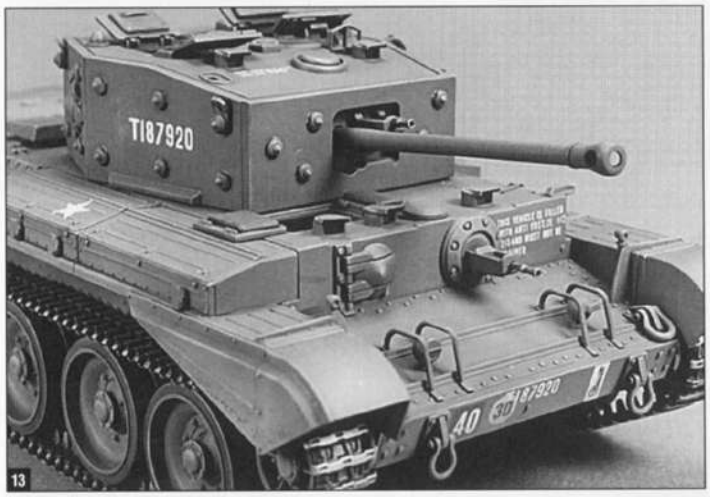
The model was weathered with an oil wash and dry brushed with light OD and tan.

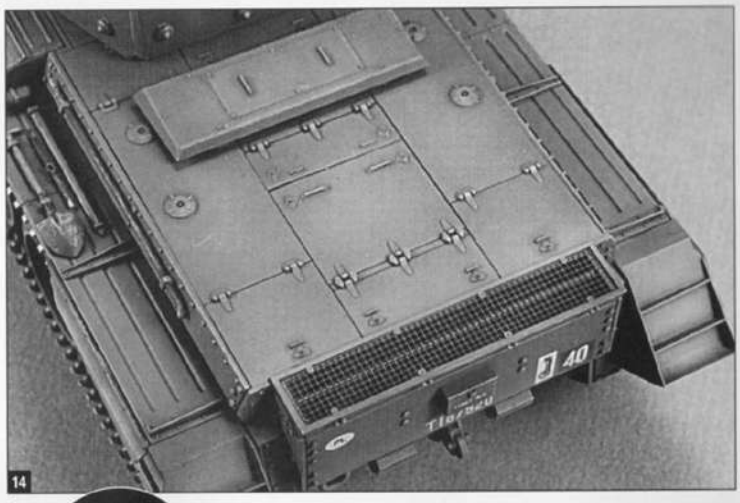
The new Tamiya tracks take paint real well, so I shot them with several light coats of "track color," which is black, red and a little gun metal. High wear areas get dry brushed with Polly-Scale Silver Plate.

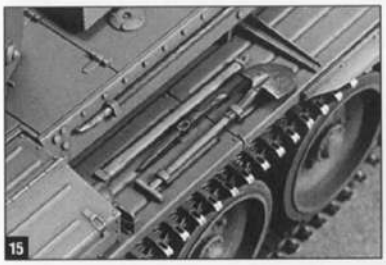


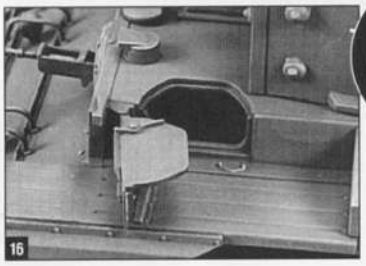


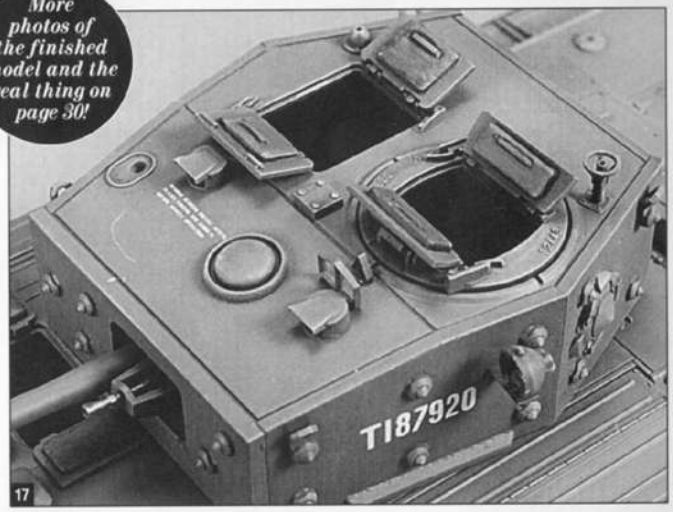












More photos of the finished model and the real thing on page 30!

1. The double hull situation. 2. The completed lower hull. 3. Check out that wheel—packed with detail. 4. All the suspension components. At top left are the idlers; to the right of them are the drive sprockets, then the roadwheels, front and back with a hub separate. 5. A few of the front hull pieces; the hull MG is fully detailed. 6. That funky bump-out hatch. Tamiya nailed it. 7. Options; the hedgerow device and the "Normandy Cowl." 8. The various fender pieces. All these were left off until after painting. 9. The Tamiya etched screens. 10. The side screens installed. 11, 12. That turret top. Weld beads, cast detail and foundry marks, groovy! 13. Up close on the front end. 14. The great looking back deck. 15. Left side tool suite. 16. I left the bump-out hatch open. 17. Turret roof. That stencil is a guess, photos show some type of marking there.

The finished tracks were installed with small drops of super glue to hold them to the tops of the roadwheels. Small tufts of paper towel stuffed between the fender and tracks kept them down while the glue set. These were added after the glue to prevent it from running and making a mess.

The four fender sub assemblies were added last.

Cheers, thanks a lot

As I said, I think this one of the best efforts to date from Tamiya. Their kits are getting increasingly easier to build. Not being a Brit armor devotee should not keep you away from this kit. It's a beauty.

The price is in line with other new releases and I found only small omissions. I would have liked to have seen the 95mm support gun parts included, as it is essentially just the gun that differed in this variant. I know the after market crowd is already going nuts over this kit and there are already at least half a dozen sets available.

There's a Cromwell in your future!

—Ken Dugan

MMiR RECCE

Tamiya Cromwell Mk.IV British Cruiser Tank Mk.VIII, A27M. Kit number 35221. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail price $39.00.

Tamiya Cromwell Photo-Etched Grill Set. Kit number 35222. Suggested retail price $13.00.

References

Cromwell Tank, Vehicle History and Specification, Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1983. ISBN: 0-11-290403-3. A few action photos, but the hook here is that balance of the book is a reprint of the tech manual! It depicts the earlier Mk.I variant, but much of the information is still highly useful.

Cromwell, Wydawnictwo Militaria 14, 1994. ISBN: 83-86209-21-6. One in a series of books from this Polish company, it contains a good selection of combat photos, as well as color plates. Also contains some of the HMSO drawings. Polish with English captions.

D-Day To Berlin, Armour Camouflage and Markings of the United States, British and German Armies June 1944 to May 1945 by Terence Wise, Arms and Armour Press, 1993. ISBN: 1-85409-212-X. A handful of good Cromwell shots, color plates and info on British markings.

Michael Wittman and the Tiger Commanders of the Leibstandarte by Patrick Agte, J.J. Fedorowicz Publishing, 1996. ISBN: 0-921991-30-4. Sorry, but I had to list this for the inevitable dioramas of the Cromwell shoot 'em up at the Villers-Bocage. The book contains all the photos taken of the battle's aftermath with the Cromwell taking the unfortunate center stage. Surprisingly good detail shots, mostly of the D hull.

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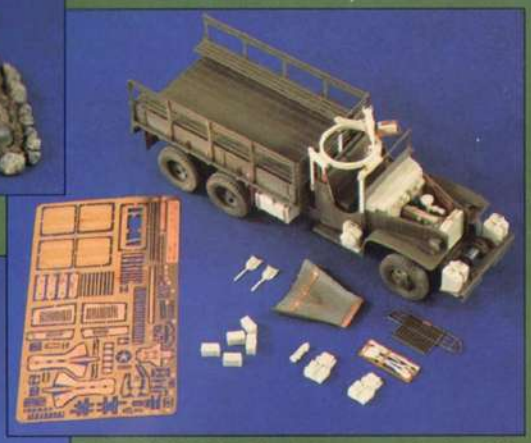

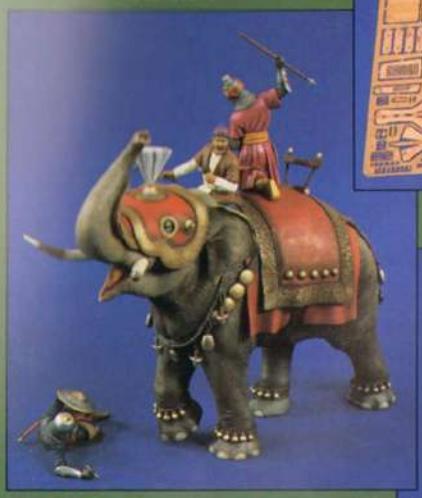

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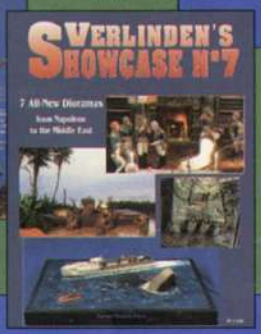

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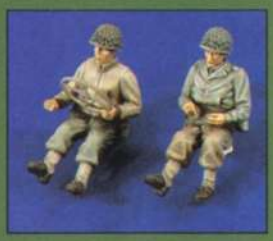

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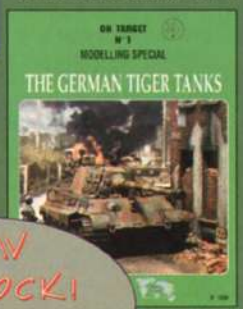

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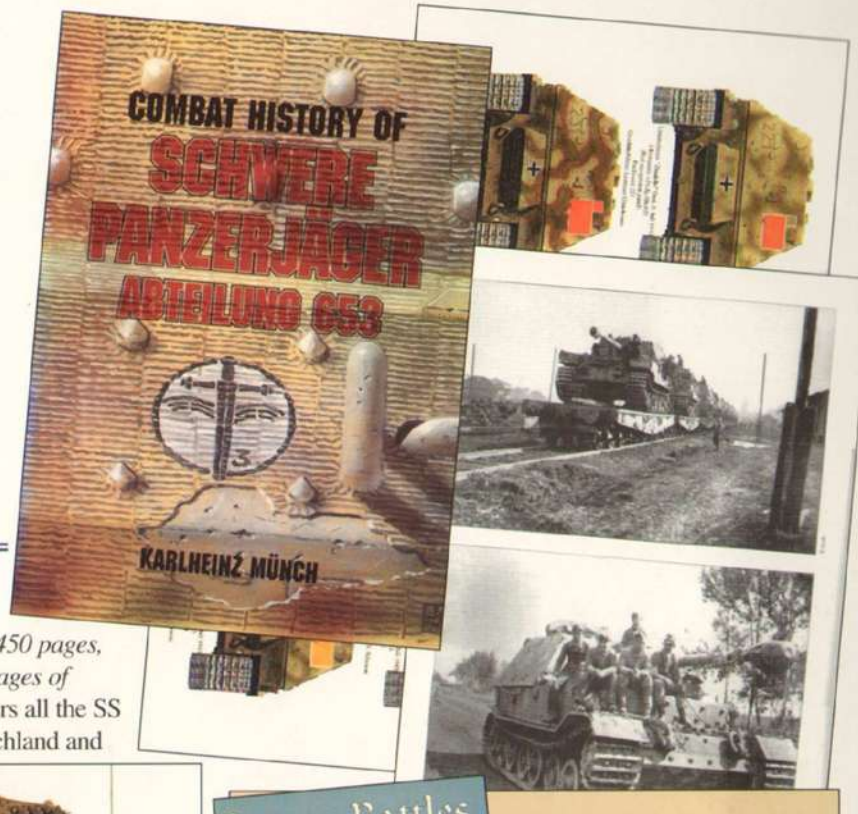
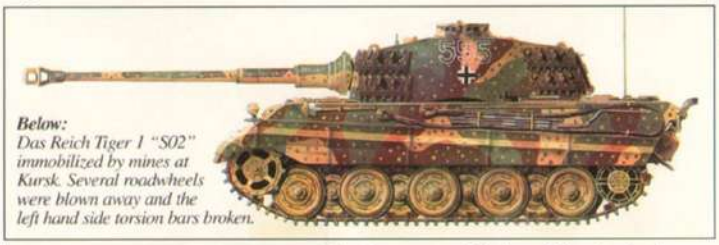


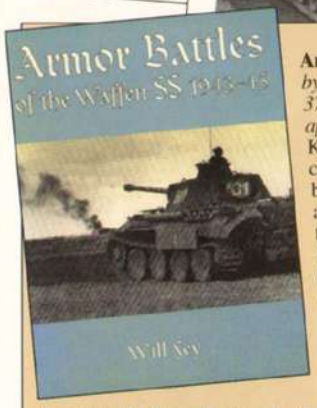
Tigers in Combat 2

by Wolfgang Schneider. Hard cover, large format, 450 pages, 600 photographs (most unpublished or rare), 32 pages of color artwork. The second book in this series covers all the SS Tiger units and "named" units such as Grossdeutschland and Hermann Göring. Also includes other little known Tiger formations such as Kompanie Hummell and Meyer. The detailed text includes delivery and losses (including causes) of Tigers and, where possible, a daily diary for each unit. If you liked Tigers in Combat I, what more can we say? $95.00 US/ $130.00 CDN. **Planned for publication in April.**



Below:
Das Reich Tiger 1 "S02" immobilized by mines at Kursk. Several roadwheels were blown away and the left hand side torsion bars broken.

Left:
The battalion commander's tank "555" is being prepared for recovery on 27.03.45 near Golzow after hitting a mine.



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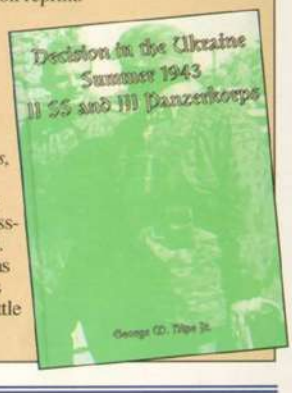

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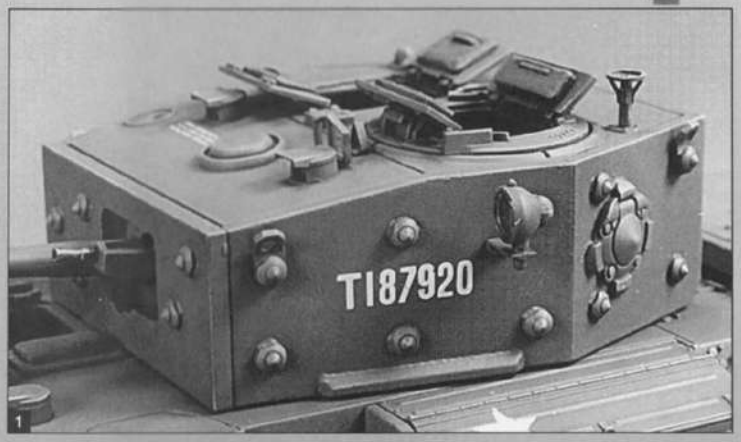
Cromwell Up-Close

We compare the Tamiya kit with the Bovington Museum's Cromwell which is a converted Centaur. The kit stacks up pretty good!



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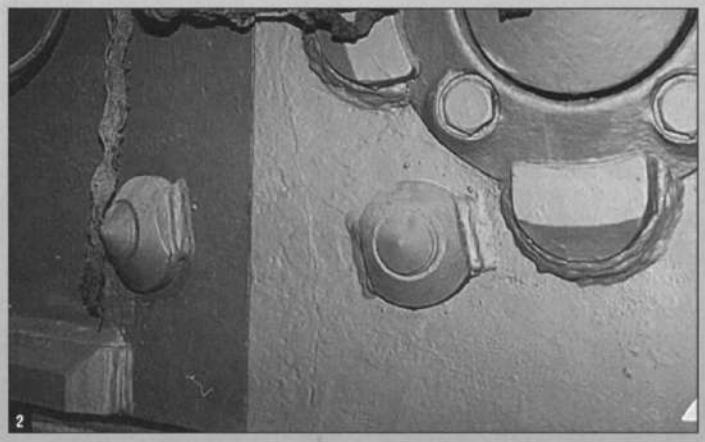
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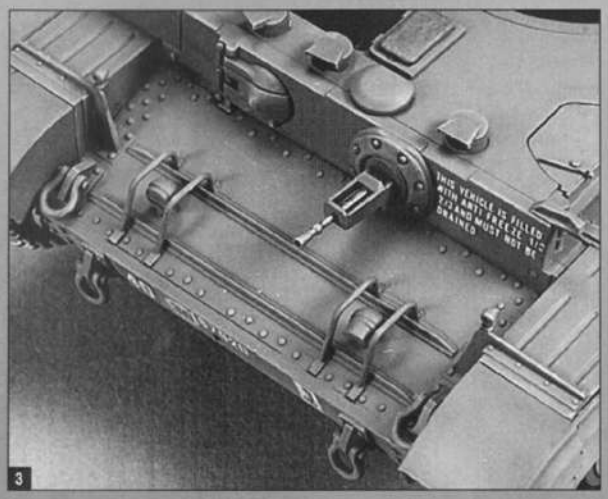

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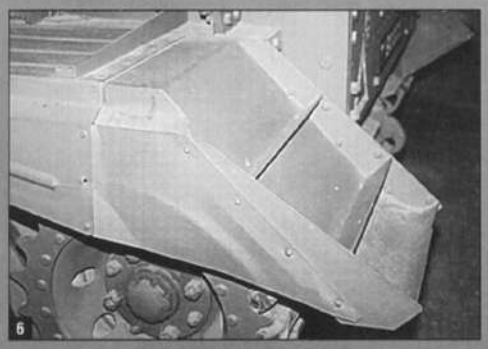
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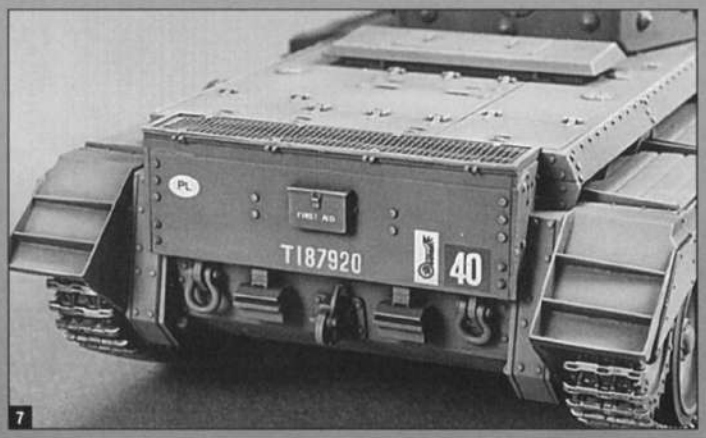

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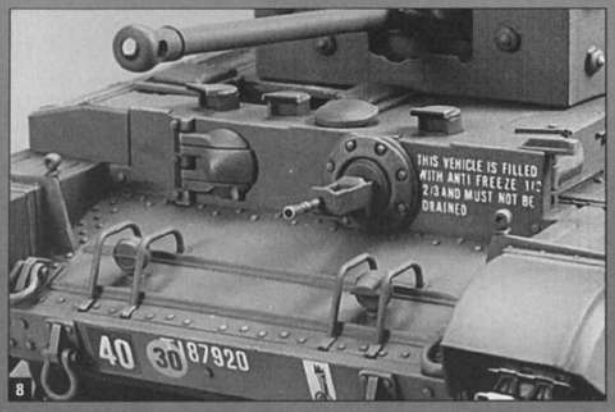

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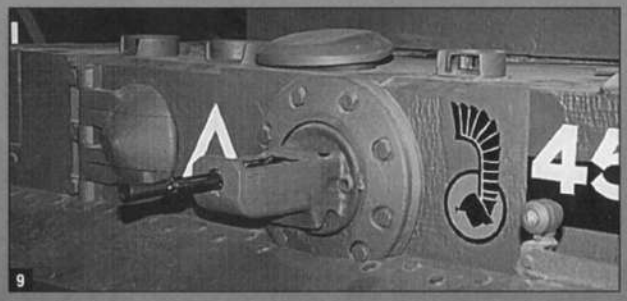
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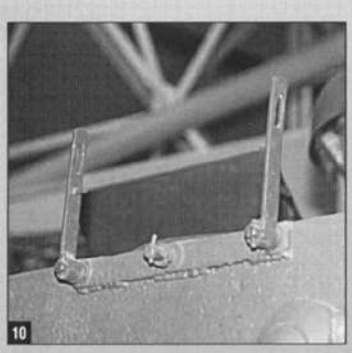
1, 2. The finished turret and the real tank showing the large welded lugs which attached the side armor panels. 3-5. The front end and the comparison of the Bovington tank. 6, 7. The left rear fender panel and the back end of the Tamiya kit. The markings are from the VP sheets on British armor. The first aid marking is from one of the generic lettering sets. 8, 9. Comparison of the front hull plates. Note the large series of gouges in the armor plate on the real tank. 10. On the top left side of the turret is this ranging device for the commander. 11, 12. Front and rear views of the searchlight. The cord leads into one of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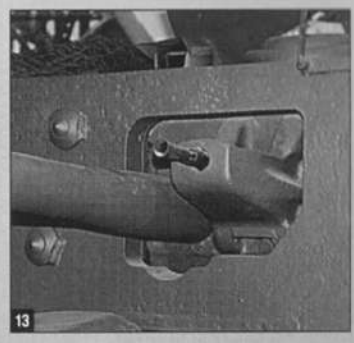
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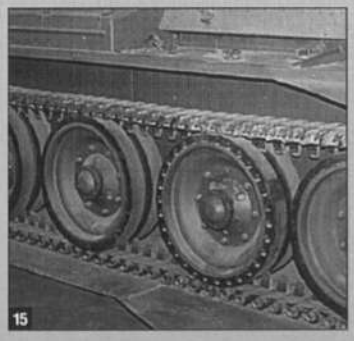
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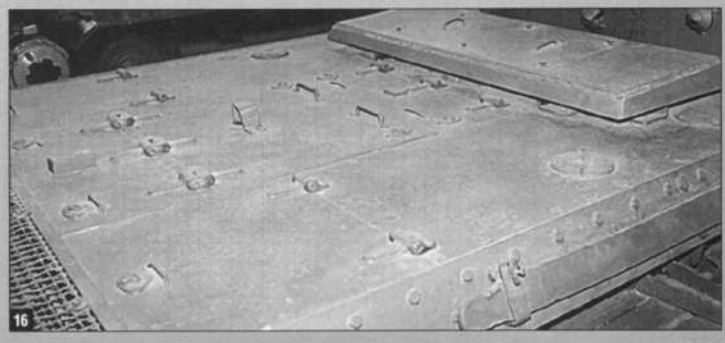
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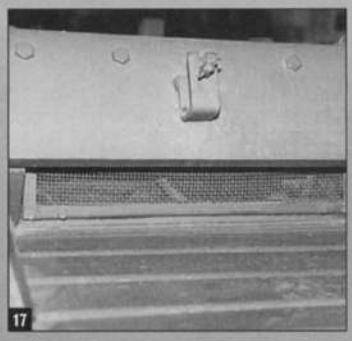
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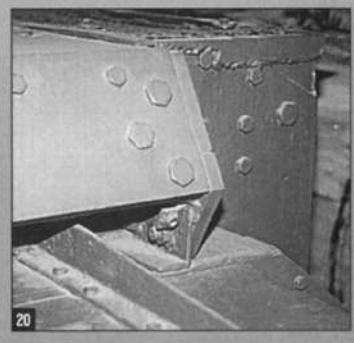
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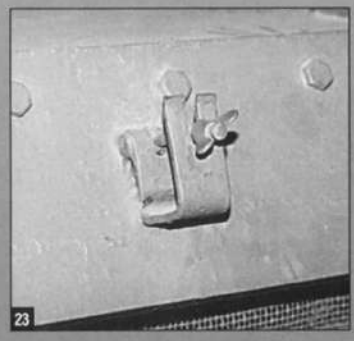
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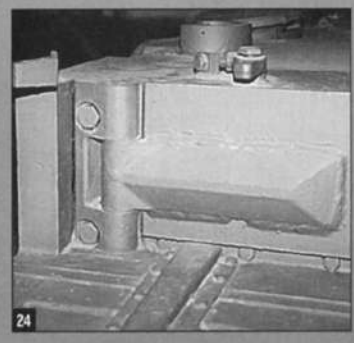
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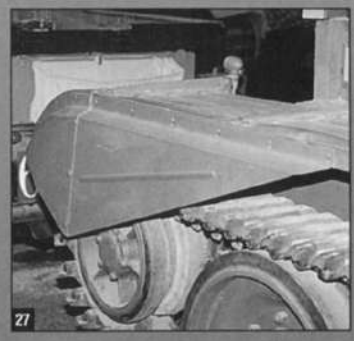
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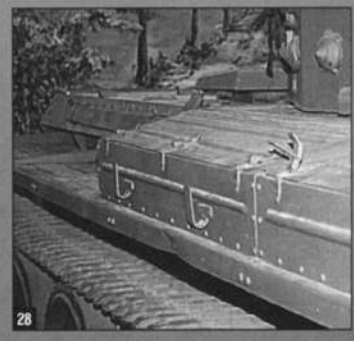
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those armored conduits mentioned in the text. Note the handles. 13. The mantlet and co-axial MG. 14. The under-hull screens on the left hand side of the tank. 15. Comparison of the pierced and solid type roadwheels. 16. The engine deck. 17. The smaller of the two screens on the left side. 18, 19. The two types of clasps seen on the side stowage boxes. Number 18 shows the locking type. The bolt is to ward off nosy geeks. 20. The very rear of the left side armor plating. Check out the bolt detail on the inside face. 21. One of two identical clasps that hold the "hockey stick" track adjuster on the right rear hull side. 22. The empty bromide fire extinguisher bracket on the right side 23. One of the two smaller brackets on the left side used to hold the track bar. 24. The large lug that attached the side swing out crew door. 25. The front left side marker light. The armored conduit lug is evident at the bottom of the photo. 26. The same area on the right side. The unusual device attached to the fender bracket is a mystery, but is seen on other converted Centaurs. 27. The front left fender panel. 28. The right side brackets used to support the tow cables. These are missing on the Tamiya kit.

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T Anyone?

The awesome new T-28 tank from ICM of the Ukraine

Believe it or not, the T-28 tank was designated a medium tank by the Russians (it was over 24 feet long). It was designed to be a breakthrough tank to assault fortified lines. This was the reason for the extra turrets as the original specs called for a tank that could fire in several directions at once.

The T-28 was a bit of an automotive dead-end, being equipped with a Vickers plunger-type suspension consisting of 12 bogies and 5 return rollers (later 4) covered by armored skirt plates. All this was powered by the M-17 aircraft engine, scooting its 17.5 tons along at a suprisingly respectable 35 mph.

The tank had more than a few innovations. The wall separating the engine from the fighting compartment was fire-proof and this made for a cooler environment for the crew. All those bogies meant a pretty smooth ride and made for a stable firing platform for the on-board guns. The Germans found captured models to be a bit on the cranky side and spoke of their frequent transmission and engine problems.

The T-28 was first used operationally in the Russo-Finnish war and it was found to be somewhat thinly armored for its role. The tanks that saw service there were T-28Bs which differed from the earlier A models primarily in the gun, which was a larger caliber in later model Bs. Some earlier A models had 5 return rollers.

Because of the Finnish experience, a third variant was produced which was designated the T-28C (duh!). This had spaced armor plating fitted to the turret and hull. There also was a bridge layer version called the IT-28, but more on this later.

Surprise! It's a T-28!

Well I must start off by stating that this kit is a real shocker. First of all, who would have ever expected three different companies to produce this beast, which is incidentally one of my all time favorite vehicles.

The odyssey began in 1993 or so when Cromwell Models released their resin version. It was a very nice kit, but at that time I wasn't hauling down the scratch to afford its $100+ price tag. I finally managed to trade for one only to see it take a suicide leap (along with 50 other kits) out of the back of a U-Haul during a move. Then depression set in.

But back to our story... The Cromwell kit was quite good and it was a pretty ballsy thing for them to do at the time. Their kit was of the second production model and was depicted as a commander's vehicle with the wrap-around turret antenna.

During the summer of 1997 while attending the IPMS (International Piss and Moan Society)* Nationals, I discovered a vendor offering an all styrene version of the T-28 produced by AER of Moldova. I jumped on these babies like a bum on a baloney sandwich. I snagged both the vendor's kits and scampered away thinking "gold mine!" I showed the kit off like a brand new car and considered it major woody material.

Well as you might guess, after intense study of the kit, it turned out to be a real tear-jerker. It was loaded with problems. But being the hard core modeling type dude that I am, I decided to conduct an extensive rebuilding operation. Two scratch built turrets and several Red Dog 12 packs later, I was ready to paint the bastard. As fate would have it, I then began hearing the rumor that a brand new kit was about to be released which included an interior—and an engine.

These vicious rumors turned out to be true when I received a call from Pat "The Man" Stansell [I prefer "Generalissimo"—Ed] of MMiR stating that he had not only the aforementioned T-28, but also a T-35 with all the same goodies. Without hesitation I threatened Pat with bodily harm that I must have these kits! However, this was only greeted with uncontrollable laughter, but when he caught his breath he agreed to send me the T-28 post haste (I guess he figured the excitement of both kits would have been too much for me—he probably was right).

After nearly assaulting the delivery driver, I tore open the box to find one of the baddest friggin' kits I have ever laid eyes on from the former Warsaw Pact. ICM hails from the Ukraine and my airplane buddies (someone has to be their friend) tell me that ICM does some very nice aircraft kits, too.

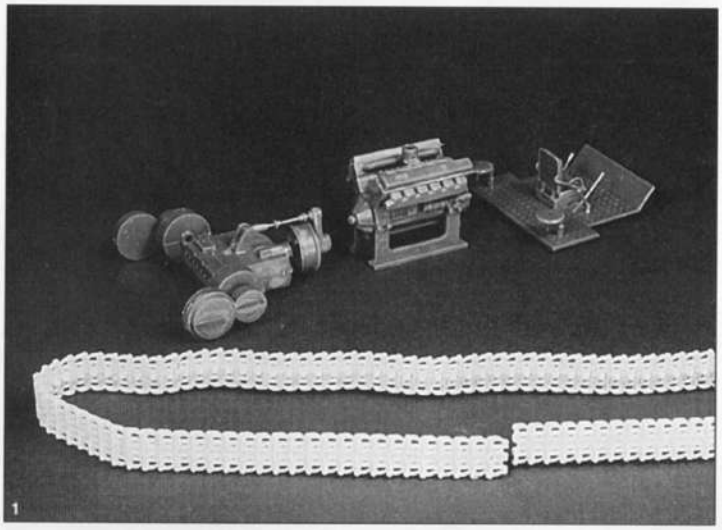
I immediately pushed aside all my other projects and pulled out my can of Whip Ass and commenced building. This is one of the fastest build-jobs I've ever accomplished, coming in at just under four days.

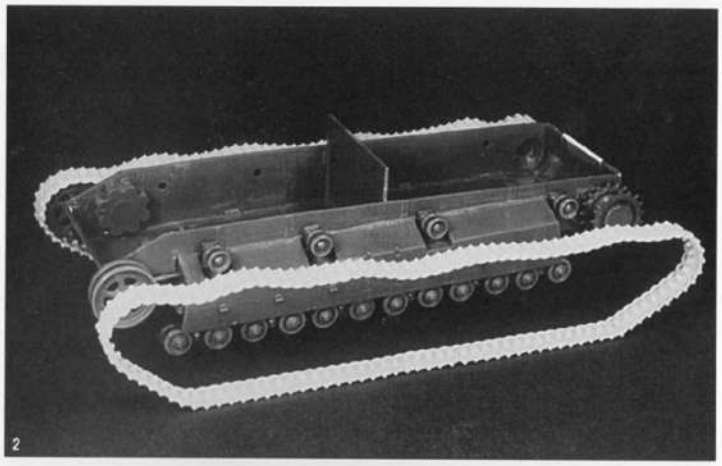
Making that kit of mine

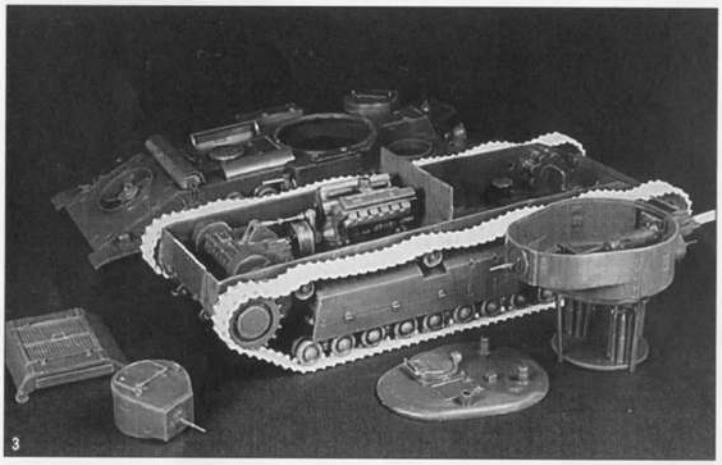
The kit consists of about six hundred injection molded parts in bright green plastic. Eastern European companies are known for their weird colored styrene and ICM is no exception. It is sort of a "Riddler" green color. The track links are individual and they are molded in a gray plastic.

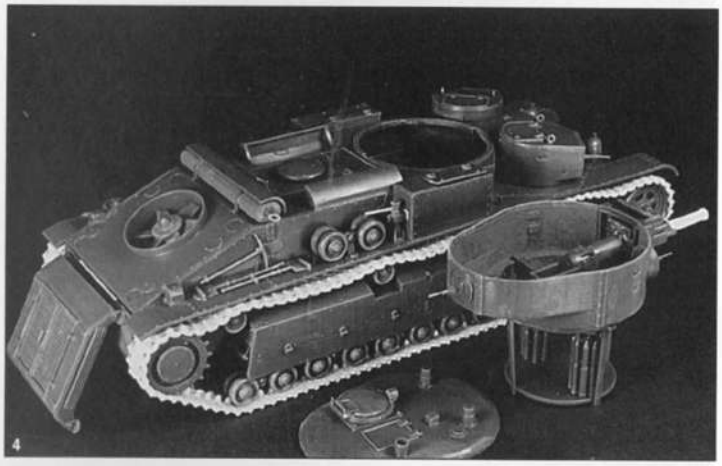
First impressions are that the entire kit is very "Dragonesque." The box art and instructions being

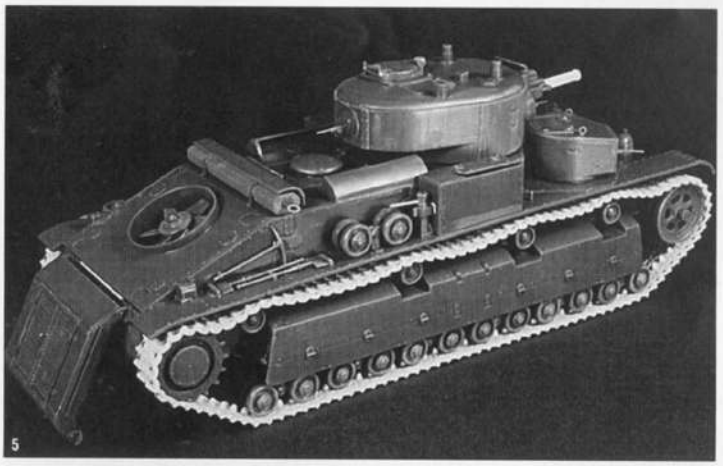
* Relax! It's only a joke!

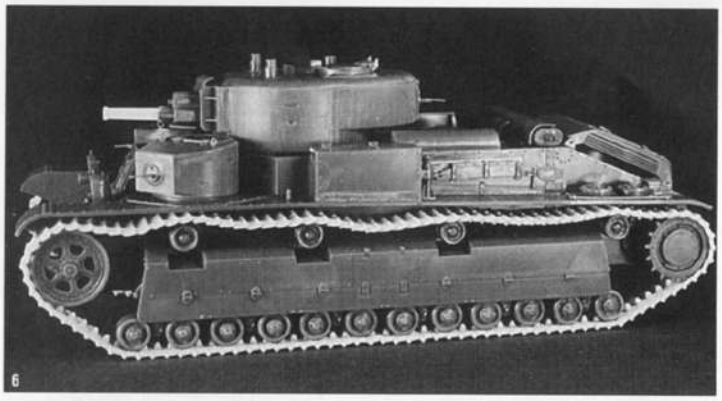


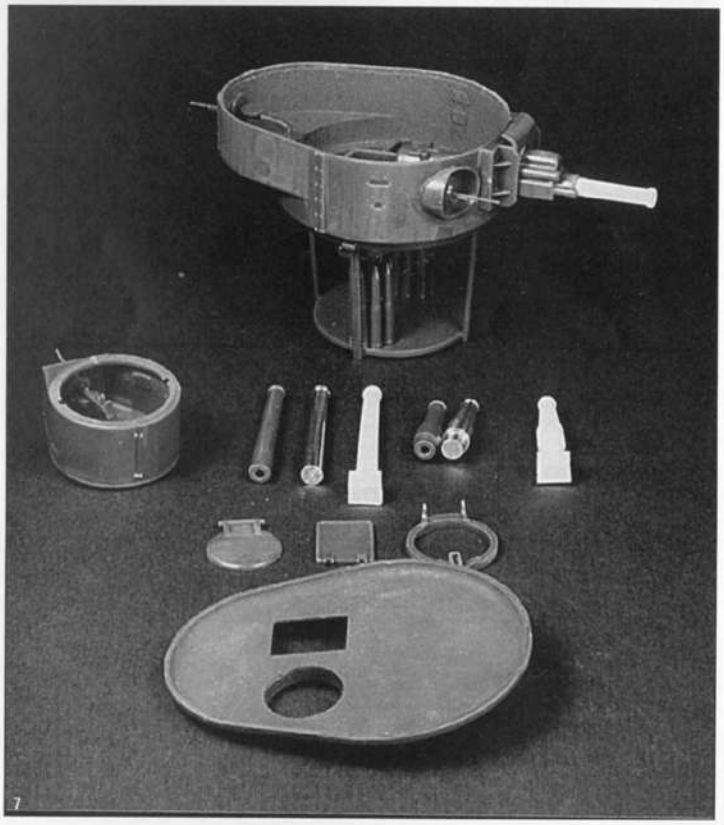




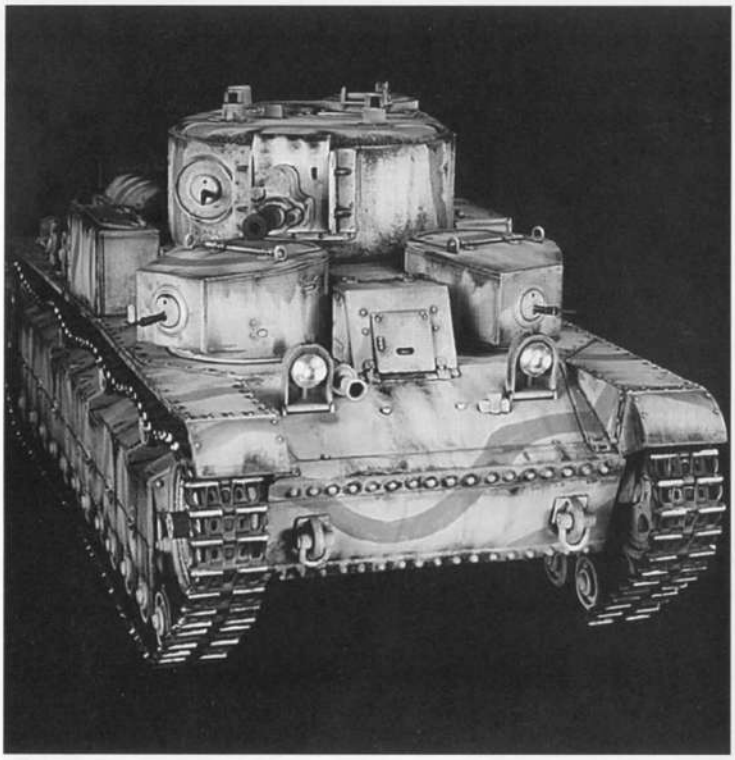


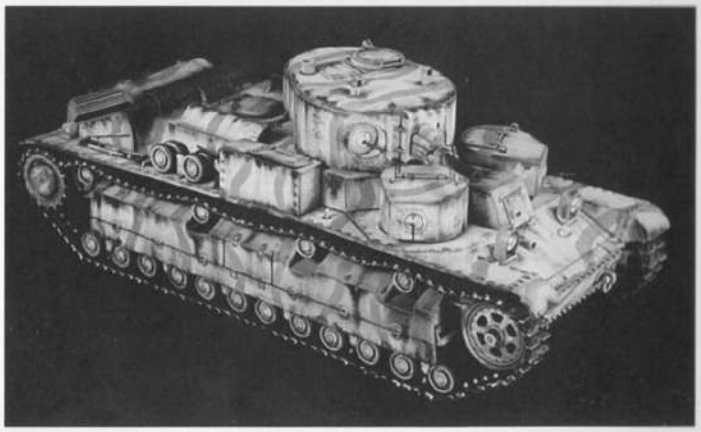


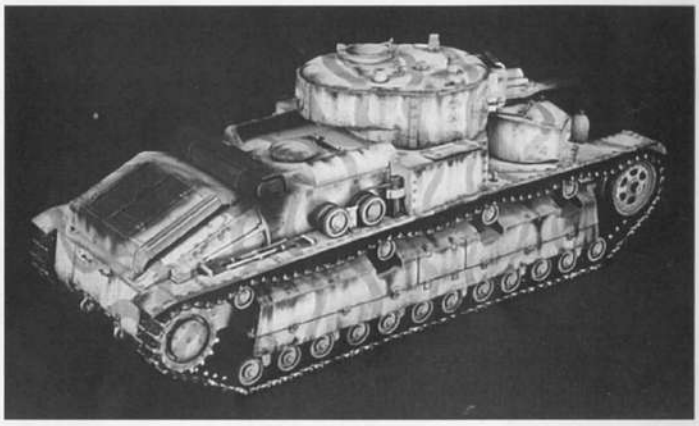




The photos on this page show the basic construction sequence I followed. 1-4. shots of the completed innards and hull as well as the completed track runs. Everything fit quite well into the hull as the middle sequence shows. Shots 4 5 and 6 show the few modifications I made, such as texturing the turret interiors and the muffler, and adding a little detail to the starboard mounted jack. 7. The kit's barrels, the turned brass replacements and the resin copies. Note the fine detail of the machine guns in these photos, too.







Above and right: overall views of the finished model. The light blue camo scheme is quite striking. I enjoy weathering winter scheme models. The white really shows off weathering well, but you must be very subtle with it. A little goes a long, long way! I forgot to mention it in the text, but the headlights were replaced with MV Lenses #LS11.

particularly reminiscent of our Chinese friends. This isn't at all what I expected. The sprue layout is neat and well organized and the attachment points are petite.

There are 15 steps in the construction sequence and all went pretty smoothly. Like most East-block kits the hull is broken down into flat plates. This is what usually gets me a little itchy, but all the panels went together perfectly.

As I mentioned at the top, the kit features a fairly complete interior. This consists of the engine, transmission and final drives, along with a driver's station, main gun detail, turret floor and detailed MGs for the auxiliary turrets. This is all you get for these turrets and if I was gonna gripe (I'm not), I'd want vision blocks and ammo racks, too. The machine guns are really something, being delicately molded almost perfectly to scale.

The engine and drive train components are impressively complete considering how little you'll see of them when the kit is finished. I built mine just for the photos and installed everything unpainted. I did texture the inside of the turrets with Dr. Microtools putty thinned with liquid glue.

Pay attention to steps 8 & 9 when dealing with the final drive area and rear plates. It can be a real tricky area.

The kit is of the B model and it does provide the option of either the long or short gun barrels. Although I built my kit almost completely out of the box, I did turn new brass barrels for use on future projects (I buildin' more man!). I also added a few missing rivets to the front hull.

One of the nicest features of the back end of the kit was the separate engine fan and cover. Photos of the T-28 abandoned in the opening phases of Barbarossa often show this cover lying along side the tank.

Other small mods to the exterior were the putty texturing of the muffler and the addition of a handle to the large jack mounted on the right fender.

The individual track links are some of the best I've ever run across in a plastic kit. They fit together with no problems and those that install around the idler didn't bind at all. With a fit this good I like to build an entire run on the tank using slow drying liquid cement. One link gets left unglued and when they're dry, the whole run can be lifted off for painting.

I'm so blue...

I decided to paint my tank in Finnish markings (they used every T-28 they could get their hands on). I was after a scheme I have seen in several publications which shows a white tank camouflaged with blue stripes. Pretty colorful for a tank, I thought. This was a common winter scheme for Finnish artillery pieces as well.

I shot the model (ouch!) overall Tamiya Black/Green and highlighted it with Tamiya Flat White. I then hand painted the stripes using Vallejo acrylics Deep Sky Blue, #844 (see address at the end of this article).

The tracks were painted gun metal and dry brushed with silver and the model was weathered overall with Windsor & Newton oils.

This kit supplies decals for 4 different vehicles, but since I decided on the Finnish scheme they went in my scrap box.

Did I love this kit? I did and I can hardly wait to tie into another one, not to mention that awesome looking T-35. On the box side panel a IT-28 bridge layer is shown in addition to a Cromwell and a Comet! Needless to say, I'm totally psyched.

—Chris "Panzer" Mrosko

MMiR RECCE

ICM T-28 Tank. Kit number 35031. Kit graciously provided by ICM's U.S. distributor, Squadron Mail Order. Suggested retail price $37.00.

Vallejo Acrylics: R&K Products, P.O. Box 1013, Agoura Hills, CA 91376-103. 818-991-9044.

References

Russian Tanks 1900-1970. The complete illustrated history of Soviet armoured theory and design by John Milsom, Galahad Books, 1970. ISBN: 0-88365-052-5. An oldie, but a goody. Many small photos, but lots of specs and history.

Soviet Tanks in Combat 1941-1945. The T-28, T-34, T-34-85 and T-44 Medium Tanks by Steven J. Zaloga, Concord Publications, 1997. ISBN: 962-361-615-5. Pretty deluxe. A great selection of clear photos showing several of the T-28 variants.

Operation Barbarossa, Tanks Illustrated No. 16 by Steven J. Zaloga, Arms and Armour Press, 1984. ISBN: 0-85368-702-1. Possibly out of print, but containing several good shots of knocked out T-28s.

The Eastern Front, Armor Camouflage and Markings, 1941 to 1945 by Steven J. Zaloga, Squadron/Signal Publications, 1983. ISBN: 0-89747-142-3. The familiar standard. Briefly covers the T-28 in both Soviet and Finnish service.

Military Modelling, August 1993. Nexus Publications. Fantastic drawings and photos.

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A Deuce and a half!

The new Tamiya kit jazzed up and decked out

Ah, yes. The good ol' GMC truck. This is, no joke, the truck that won the war. Thousands and thousands were produced and they were shipped everywhere on the planet. The deuce and a half was truly an extension of America's automotive prowess. It was tough, reliable, simple to repair and build, and there was never a shortage of drivers. Did you know that the United States had more military age men that could drive than any of the other WW2 combatants? Almost twice as many as Germany.

Many of the truck's components were standardized and so many of the types were produced that the Soviets pretty much stopped making their own trucks in 1942 to rely on the Lend Lease GMC and Studebakers coming in from the U.S. of A.

The GMC and its variants were shipped broken down, then reconstructed at the delivery sights. The guys at GMC even figured out how to make a production line on the spot and there were "Little Detroits" from the Normandy beach head to Burma road.

The nick-name "deuce and a half" stems from the cargo capacity, rather than the truck's weight. The standard GMC was nearly five tons empty, but its off road cargo capacity was 2.5 tons and 4 tons on roads (surely this was regularly exceeded).

The deuce and a half has a little modeling history behind it, too. The kit has been around for a while, but never before from Tamiya. The first kit probably was the old Peerless Max kit (I'm not counting any of the soft plastic versions sold in dime stores). This was the same version as the Tamiya kit and they also did a tipper version. Italeri took over these molds and their very first armor kit (0201) was a water tanker version of this same kit (one big tank on the back, not to be confused with the gas tanker version which has two smaller tanks).

Heller of France also did a kit of the deuce and a half, but theirs was the hard cab version and it included the large overhead MG ring.

Much to the disappointment of serious truck geeks, all of the previous kits except the long dead Peerless kit contained the Timkin split type axles and the Tamiya kit follows suit.

The kit

Tamiya has gone and given us the CCKW-353 with the open cab. The kit represents all the latest in Tamiya famous molding technology; crisp parts, ease of construction and clear concise instructions.

Construction starts off with the chassis. The first thing I noticed is that the frame is composed of solid members rather than the girder type seen in the Italeri and Heller kits. This is not as realistic, but it's more sturdy. It's difficult to tell the difference when the kit is built.

The first choice you get to make is whether or not to add the big winch on the front (I did).

A pretty complete engine is included and it's attractive considering that it's only made up of seven parts. More on this later.

One of the big deals of this kit is its simple part breakdown on the suspension components. When news of this first leaked out, it created a bit of a panic, "Tamiya is regressing!" and other such hysterical comments were heard as people rushed out of buildings and ran screaming into the streets.

Well, calm down. What Tamiya did was create a beautiful one piece axle and drive shaft assembly. It's composed of the three axles and their appropriate drive shafts. That's all. What was once eleven parts is now one. This assembly gets dropped on to the springs and after adding the backs of the differentials and a few other parts, you're essentially done.

The wheels are all plastic deals with the ubiquitous poly cap. No rubber tires here.

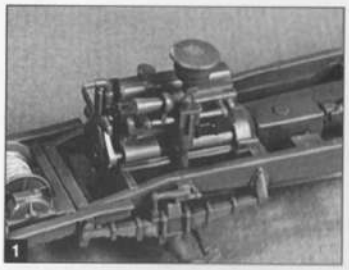
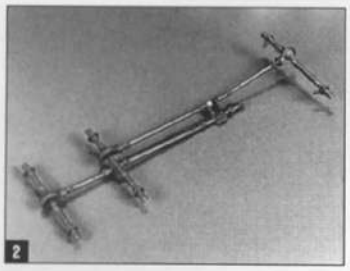
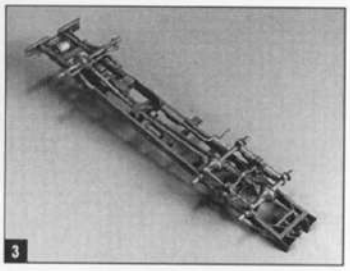
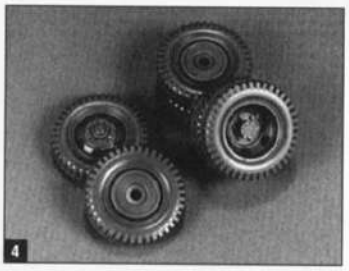
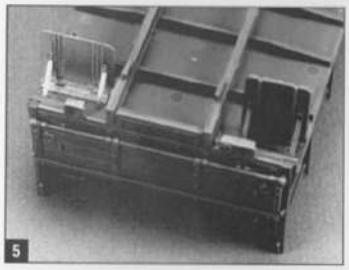
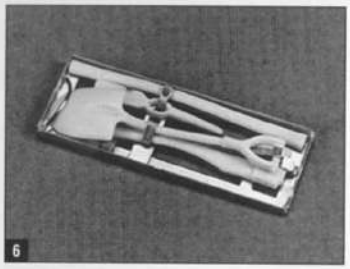
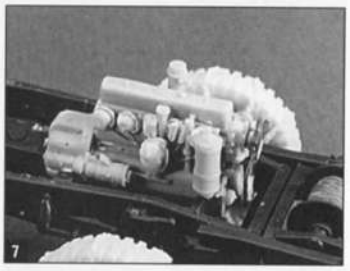
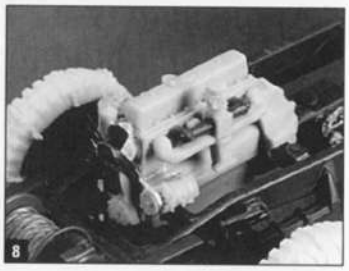
I should digress here a moment to confess that I decided to use the new VP update kit on my truck. Unfortunately for me, quite a bit of the construction was already complete at the time of this momentous decision. To further compound things, I also opted for the new Tank Workshop chained tires and their new deep wading set.

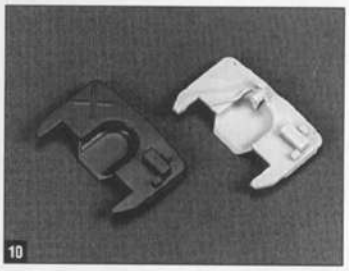
The calm before the storm

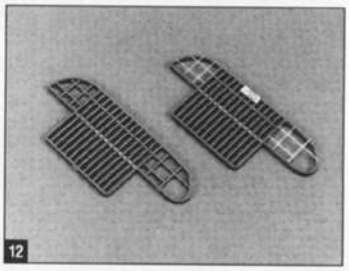
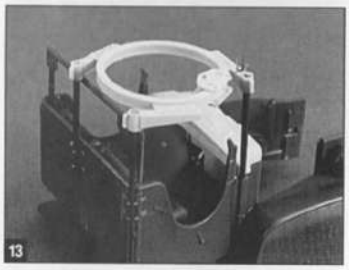
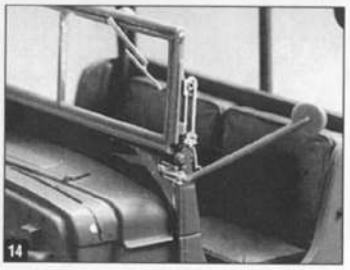
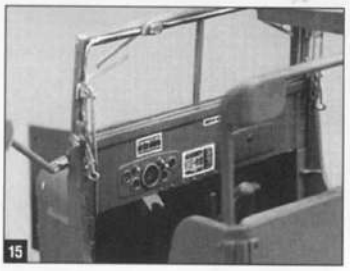
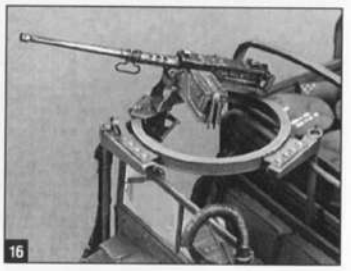
Before I got to any of this good stuff, I finished the basic construction on the frame, cab and cargo bed. Nothing too exciting to report here. The VP set does include a detailed replacement fire wall for the cab, so I left off kit part D3.

The cargo bed is a real stunner, with tons of gorgeous rivet and wood grain detail. I also was impressed by the fit of the parts which is flawless. Tamiya gives you the choice of troop seats up or down.

On the flip side of the cargo bed I had to carve off the already installed mud flaps to replace them



with VP's parts. These include mounting hardware and they are nice and thin (the real ones were sheet metal). Other etched goodies from VP include the numerous hooks for securing cargo all around the outside of the bed. VP thoughtfully provides extras for when your carpet gets hungry.

A totally awesome tool rack gets constructed from VP etched and resin components. This replaces the kit parts C2 and C10. Everything's included, tools, straps a detailed frame. I took the time to linger here. Then I had a latté and a smoke.

Tamiya provides separate bows for the canvas top (but no hick plastic cover—damn!). You can stack 'em up or trim the lengths and install. Keep an eye on these, there's not much of a glue point and they pop off easily.

The bed and tool rack were set aside for painting.

Chain me up

The TWS chained tires replace only the outside tires on the back four and both of the front wheels. You retain the kit's hubs and poly caps. Before assembling the rear tires, I painted the inside faces black.

Back up front, I exorcised the kit motor and replaced it with the VP one. I believe this is the spare GMC motor that they offered some time ago in a crate. The parts are all highly detailed and even include little photo-etched blades for the radiator fan.

VP would have you add the intake manifold from the copper wire provided, but since it was going to waste anyway, I used the kit's. I also filched the engine mounts.

Because I was adding the deep wading kit, I drilled out the bottom of the exhaust manifold to accommodate the white metal TWS part. I made sure it wasn't too tight a fit, so I could test fit as I went.

The VP engine mates with the kit's tranny well, but beware that the bell housing on the back of the engine is longer than the one provided in the kit. This causes the engine to sit too far forward in the frame. This isn't too terrible, but it does force the replacement radiator to sit forward and this means it won't install where the Tamiya radiator did. I carved off the locating points on the inner engine side walls and attached the radiator to the frame instead.

TWS also provides a breathing snorkel in its kit and this is another well molded white metal part. It attaches were the air cleaner would go, so chuck this in your spare parts box. Again, I drilled out the bottom of the snorkel to allow plenty of test fitting. Both parts later fit up against the cab and both should also snake neatly out from under the hood.

The TWS set includes a cool little photo from the tech manual for the proper snorkel set-up. I noticed this included seals over the spark plugs and the distributor cap. I added these with blobs of Miliput.

Other parts provided by VP for the engine compartment are nifty photo-etched panels for the sides which represent the back side of the vents. The lower ones went in no problem. However, although I may have been suffering one of my frequent bouts of dementia, the ones for the larger panels were the wrong shape.

More detail intrigue

In addition to the firewall, VP also provides the firewall top cover. This is molded as part of the hood in the kit, so it must be carefully removed to match the new resin part. I wanted to be able to take this off to amaze my friends and neighbors, so I was extra careful in removing the plastic. I thinned down the underside of the Tamiya hood with a Dremel tool to ensue a tight fit.

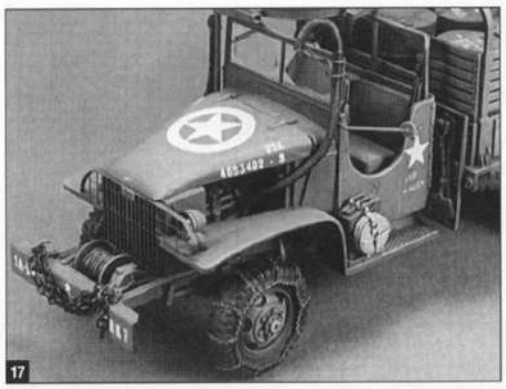
Another big part of the VP set is the overhead ring mount for a .50 cal MG. According to U.S. Army doctrine, every fourth truck was supposed to have one. VP provides all the parts, including base plates for the support rods, the ring mount and all its associated hardware.

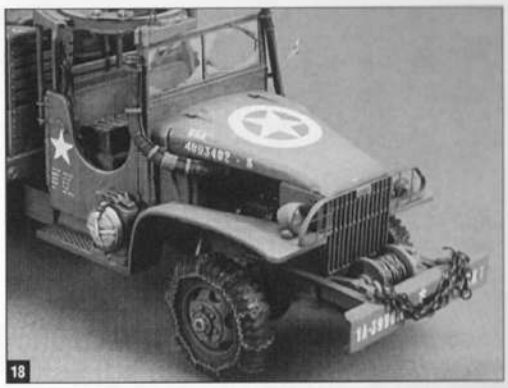
This thing is mega-tricky to install and I did have it installed once only to discover that it was actually crooked. I added the base plates first, then the rods, then attempted to arrange the ring and the support arms. The better method would be to add the support arms to the ring first, then determine the length of the rods, add the bases and install. Anyway, it ended up looking O.K.

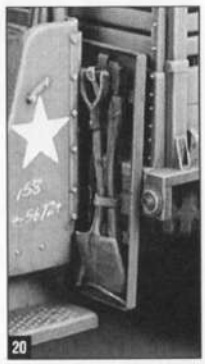
On the slide mount there are two handles. Brackets for these are labeled 45 in the VP instructions. Only one set is found on the etched sheet under this number, the other is labeled 44.

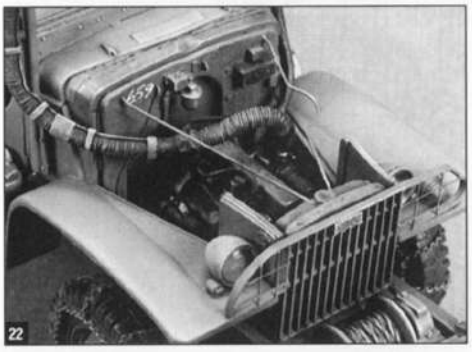
One other thing, then I'll clam up: the ring should sit at least a scale foot or more above the top of the cab. I went mostly by the box top photo (which is shot from above) and ended up installing

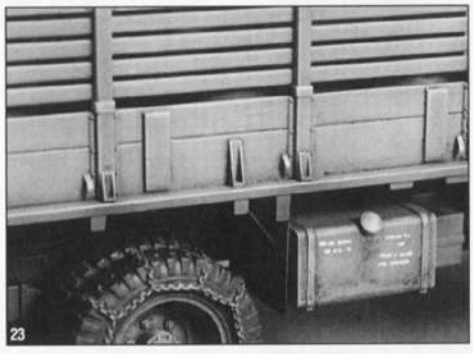
1. The Tamiya engine as it comes. Say Good-bye! 2. That cool one-piece drive train. 3. The finished chassis. 4. The stock Tamiya wheels and tires. 5. The flip side of the cargo bed with the VP mud guard on the left and the stock parts on the right. 6. The completed VP tool rack. 7, 8. Right and left views of the VP replacement engine. Shot seven shows my extra waterproofing of the spark plugs and the distributor. 9. The Tamiya radiator (left) and the VP part. 10. Same thing with the VP part on the right. 11. The underside of the Tamiya hood with VP's etched details. 12. Tamiya part on the left; VP modified on the right. 13. The initial fitting of the MG ring. Note the firewall cover. 14. A close-up of the small fittings supplied in the VP set for the windshield. 15. Tamiya supplies these little interior placards for the truck. 16. The finished VP MG ring and that finicky .50 cal. 17, 18. Right and left views of the front end. 19. A peek inside the cab. 20. The installed tool rack. 21. Nice rear end baby! 22. The finished engine with its added plumbing. 23. The gas tank and bed sides. The little hooks along the bed are VP etched items. 24. The winch area. The tow chain is Hudson & Allen.

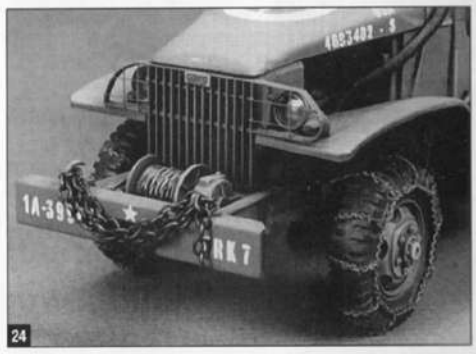












it a little low, but my references indicate a higher mount. This was, no doubt, to accommodate the installation of the soft top. Oh well, it still looks good to me! The whole thing was topped off with a PE travel clamp for the gun.

I have kind of a love/hate relationship with the VP .50 cal. I love the way it looks, but putting it together can be a little frustrating. The instructions compounded this somewhat by taking the illustration from the existing kit and shrinking it down about 60% (arrrgh!). I made sure to set the finished piece aside in a very safe place until I was ready to paint it. Because of its small size, I left off the cocking handle until the last minute.

The VP photo-etched sheet includes some useful details for the windshield. These are the parts that enable the driver to tip open the two glass panels and get the breeze through his crew cut.

Be aware that part 24 actually should install on the back of the little horn beneath the windshield. The knob (part 28) gets installed on the front. The remaining parts create a small assembly at the upper part of the windshield.

Also provided was the bracket for attaching the rear view mirror. If properly installed, it can be made to look exactly like the real thing. I modified the kit's mirror to fit. I also added the VP windshield wipers and solder to represent the wires for the wiper motors.

At this point, I ended up with four basic sub assemblies: the cab, the frame, the bed and the tires. I figured this was the time to begin painting. I painted the frame first, basic black. I then went back over and highlighted with an olive drab mixture. I then weathered and detail painted most of the engine.

I stuck a hunk of sprue in each wheel to aid in painting. Oddly, the sprues from the Tamiya Wespe fit perfectly. This could be evidence of an international conspiracy. I'll have to get back to you on this.

Next, I painted and weathered the cab interior. Tamiya does provide some great little decals to represent the various instruction placards for the dashboard. Completing the cab meant adding the radiator and the grill (spruced up thanks to several more of the excellent VP etched parts) and the two wire radiator struts.

When this was complete I installed the cab on the frame and began finishing the installation of the wading gear. Both the parts are soft metal so they can be bent to shape. I made sure they both fit snug against the windshield frame. I added wire loops to the exhaust pipe, but used twisted wire to install the snorkel on the forward member of the MG mount. The TWS photo also shows a few other tubes running here and there in the engine compartment and I added these with various thicknesses of solder.

Painting: The final chapter

I finished the entire painting and weathering process with the vehicle disassembled. It seemed to work out better this way. Everything had a convenient place to pick up that would later be out of the way. All the sub-assemblies were painted the olive drab mixture (2 parts Polly Scale OD and 1 part French Dark Green) over black. On broader areas, this was further faded with light applications of the mixture brightened with Armor Yellow.

The hubs were masked with a drafting template and the chains were drybrushed with gunmetal prior to adding a final coat of dark gray.

On the cargo bed, all the reflectors were first painted Andrea acrylic silver (it's very bright) and then painted with Tamiya clear red. All the other parts like the tools and MG were painted at this time.

I soldiered right on armed with a whole slew of VP dry transfers (sheets 153 and 159). Most of their earlier white dry transfers are especially suited for a deuce and a half or a Sherman. Cool deal. I also made use of the Scale Model Accessories dry transfer set for the deuce and a half.

I pretty much went ape adding all types of markings from all the sheets. This includes all the national markings and registration numbers, along with the various other stenciled warnings, cautions, etc. I also added a few of the hand written type numbers to the fire wall and the side of the cab.

The SMA sheet rather ambitiously provides (or says it provides) many of the really small stencils like the Prestone marking for the front hood. However, although they appeared on the instruction sheet, they were simply non-existent on the sheet itself. I also found that only a partial set of registration numbers was to be found (for the hood and front bumper), leaving me to scrounge the remain-

ing ones. I was deeply hurt by this, but I feel that in time, I will some how learn to live a normal life.

I was going for a fresh off the LCT scheme, so I left the weathering to a minimum. I did give the kit a dark brown wash (W&N oil paint, 2 parts brown to one part black suspended by Model Master thinner), followed by a dry brush of light OD and tan.

The final bit of construction was the addition of the clear parts; the windshield and headlight lenses. I masked off a wiper mark on each windshield panels and lightly sprayed a dust color over them. All the clear parts were attached with thinned white glue.

Cargo and truck go, too

For my 2 to 4 tons of cargo I went with 55-gallon drums from the VP Super Value set (it ended up being a real VP theme didn't it?). The bed fits 21, although I would have thought they'd fit more precisely. That's the Army for ya.

I painted them various shades of brown and decorated them with more of those teeny stencils. Probably not very accurate, but still a helluva lot of fun.

The finished Tamiya kit is quite a worthy one. I loved the simplified construction. I can't think of too many negative points. Perhaps a choice of the banjo axles would have been nice. The price also is a tad on the high side. This may keep more budget conscious modelers on the Heller/Italeri road.

There is tremendous conversion potential in this kit. Tamiya illustrates several in its instruction sheet (is that a hint?) and I'm especially attracted to the shortened wheel base version, the 352. This was used as a prime mover for the 105mm gun and it also was sometimes seen with dual wheels on the front axle. Cutting that solid frame would be way easier than the old girder frames, although I hope Tamiya does a future version itself.

I enjoyed the VP set immensely. There were a few parts that I did not use. The gun racks and M1 Garands were too nice to stuff out of sight in the cab and the forward mounted gas cans struck me as more of a post war modification. Ammo cans, field packs, etc. are provided. I only used the ammo cans, setting them on the front seat, below the gun.

The casting quality is up there and the photo-etched parts are easy to bend. The only drawback to the set was the somewhat vague instructions.

Tank Workshop's wheel set is extremely well done. The molding on the chains being almost scary. Their wading set is a good way of setting off the engine mods and it allows for a little extra detailing, which I can never resist. The tech manual photo was a simple, yet useful addition.

The accessory sets were reasonable in price, even compared to the high price of the kit. So I'm off to the beach to off load some fuel drums—see you there!

—Pat Stansell

MMiR RECCE

Tamiya U.S. 2 1/2-Ton 6x6 Cargo Truck. Kit number 35218. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggest retail $38.00.

Verlinden Productions 6x6 Update Set. Kit number 1314. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggest retail $19.95.

The Tank Workshop GMC 2.5 ton Chained Wheels. Kit number TTWA 0048. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggest retail $11.00.

The Tank Workshop GMC Deep Wading Kit. Kit number TTWA 0061. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggest retail $6.75.

Scale Model Accessories 1/35th US Army truck markings ETO WW2. Kit number SMAP 0461. Set graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggest retail £3.50.

References

There is a fair amount out there on the GMC, especially for the military vehicle restoration crowd. Here's the ones I used for this project.

The GMC 6x6 and DUKW A Universal Truck, by Jean-Michel Boniface and Jean-Gabriel Jeudy, Haynes Publishing Group, 1990. ISBN 0 85429 860 6. The complete story of the GMC which includes all the variants and technical data. A great book to have around.

GMC CCKW 353 & 352, the Workhorse of the Army in Czech Private Collections. Photo Manual for Modelers, Wings and Wheels Publications, Special Museum Line No. 3., 1998. The name pretty much sums it all up. A great little value priced book with tons (2.5 to be exact) of color! photos and lots of the little detail shots we crave. A steal at eighteen bucks.

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Cat's In The Cradle

AFV Club and Academy slug it out in a head to head match up

We remember the surveys, we remember the outcry of the masses, we remember the high level lobbying in the inner circles of modeling's Mecca's. And the people cried, "Give us the hellcat in plastic, and we want it now." And the gods of modeling heard the people and it was good. And to further please their subjects the modeling Gods gave unto them not one, but two Hellcats from which to choose. And the people consumed them like manna from heaven...

Well folks, they're here! Two kits of the Hellcat, or as it was officially known, the M18 motor gun carriage. The first release came from Academy followed by a second from AFV Club. Now we realize that there has been a lot of buzz about these kits on the web and in a few publications. From what we can discern from all of this jabbering is that the modeling public has some preconceived opinions of which is the kit to buy.

The battle lines were drawn and it is pretty clear that the favorite kit so far is the AFV Club offering. We decided to do a "side-buy-side" comparison for ourselves, and what we found was pretty interesting indeed.

The Hellcat was the first and only tank destroyer that was designed for its intended role. This was a result of the U.S. Army's twisted doctrine that stated that tanks should be used as infantry support and breakthrough weapons and should not be used to fight enemy tanks. That role would be filled by the tank destroyer. We all know the results of this boo-boo.

Production of the Hellcat began in October 1944 and a total of 2,507 were produced. Six hundred and eighty-five were later converted to M39 utility vehicles (basically an open-topped APC). The Hellcats 76mm gun gave it about the same punching power as the Sherman, but its open-topped and thinly armored turret offered its crews little protection.

The Hellcat's true strength was in its speed. It could reach a top speed of 60 mph, which gave the little feline a nice tactical advantage. Its ability to get in and out of trouble fast made it very popular with its crews. The Hellcat did not undergo many changes through its production run, other than receiving an improved Continental R-975-C4 radial engine, which increased its horsepower. Three versions of the 76mm were used in the Hellcat, the M1A1 and M1A1C, which were identical except that the M1A1C had a threaded end that would mount a muzzle brake or a thread protecting ring. The M1A2 differed in that it had a tighter twist in it's rifling.

A prototype using an M18 chassis and the turret of the 90mm M36 Jackson was produced and tested with good results. This, like many other 90mm gun carriage proposals, was rejected due to the development of the Pershing.

Rather than offer the typical blow-by-blow build and review type format we decided to do things a little differently and hopefully YOU, the end user, can decide for yourself which kit is the one for you, if not both. We had Barry Beaudry and Nick Vanston build the kits head to head, with Barry building the AFV Club kit, and Nick tackling the Academy. The comparison is based on a ten point criteria which we felt should cover most of the considerations one might ponder when deciding whether or not to buy a kit. Each of the ten considerations will be rated on a scale of 1 to 10 and then added together for a total of 100 possible points. On our scale, a nine or ten would be the superlative Tamiya T-72, while a lowly one or two would be something along the lines of those nasty eastern block kits. The criteria for point consideration are:

1) First impressions; 2) Accuracy; 3) Kit quality; 4) Options; 5) Interior; 6) Suspension & tracks; 7) Upper hull; 8) Turret; 9) Markings and 10) Overall.

Let the games begin!

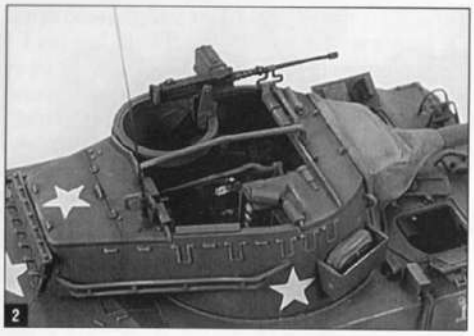
The Academy Kit, first impression

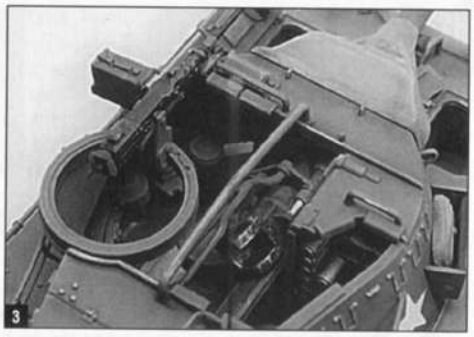
The kit is packaged very well, attractive box art, all the parts wrapped in plastic bags, and a very clear instruction booklet. Upon inspecting the parts I could not help being a little put off by the motorization holes in the lower hull. Two nasty sink marks were present on the upper and lower front glacis plates. Yuck!. A closer examination revealed numerous knockout marks and a lot of mold flash. It's filler time. On a happier note there are a lot of parts, some better than others, with quite a few options and some very cool naked ladies on the decal sheet. I am a real sucker when it comes to nude babes. My first impression was that the kit resembled a 1970's Tamiya offering.

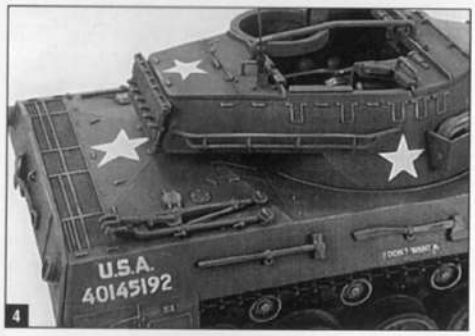
I give it an eight in this area.

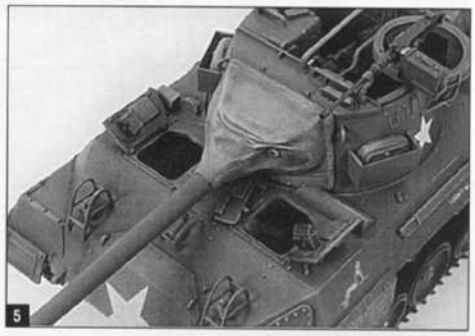
Accuracy

According to the drawings and photographs that we have, the height of the hull looks to be a little high, probably due to motorization. The rear engine vents are the most glaring inaccuracy and would probably be a real bear to correct. These are molded as a fine diamond shaped screen, when in fact, they should be a wider square shape. Perhaps the after market boys can offer some help in the near future. In addition, the brush guards and grab









All shots this page are of the Academy kit except number 7. 1-3. The turret area showing the .50 cal MG and a few of the interior details. Compare these shots with 8, 9, and 10 at right. 4. The right rear hull area. This is the stowed .50 cal MG tripod. Compare with shot number 11 at right. 5. Academy provides this nice option for the mantlet; a canvas cover. 6. This is where some of the most striking differences occur. Compare this with shot 13 and also see number 7. On the opposite page, numbers 8 through 13 are all the AFV Club kit. Shot 14 shows an over head comparison with the AFV Club kit on the left; Academy on the right. 15 This view shows the differences in height, rear plate, tail lights and tool stowage.

handles are a little on the thick side. However, the cast texture on the gun mantlet and some of the other details, such as the tools, were pretty good.

Accuracy gets a seven.

Kit quality

The overall quality of the kit was pretty good. As I said earlier there were some sink marks and quite a few annoying knockout marks that require some attention. Fortunately, most of them are in places that will not be visible when the model is complete. I was pleasantly surprised at the fit of all the components, everything went together with little trouble. Some filler was required on the front glacis when the upper and lower hulls were joined. My only real complaint was with the consistency of the plastic, which is very soft and resistant to sanding. The instructions were very clear.

Seven is the tally here.

Options

Here's where Academy really shines. You get a choice of modeling a cast mantlet or one with a canvas cover, which is a prominent feature in most photos. You can also choose between the protective collar on the gun tube or a muzzle brake which was used on later Hellcats. Also provided is a choice between cast tow hooks or the more common bar type. There is also plenty of stowage in the form of bedrolls, boxes, jerrycans, 50 cal. MG boxes, a few loose 76mm rounds and a tow cable made of string. I intend to stow my Hellcat out at a later date. All this represents a good value in my book.

I give options a nine.

Interior

Academy seems to have gone a little farther than AFV in regards to interior detail. One thing that stands out here are that the sponson mounted shell racks are molded on. This will not be seen when everything is buttoned up. There are omissions of personal gear storage, drive shaft, various hydraulic lines, conduit runs and other small details that add to the clutter of a tank's interior. Let's face it, there are limitations to injection molding and I have yet to see a totally accurate interior in plastic. Here, too, would be a good opportunity for the resin crowd to jump in and maybe throw in an engine to boot. There is plenty of room for the detail freaks to go wild, but the out of the box jocks won't be disappointed either. The end result is adequate. I would have liked have to seen that engine.

Interior score is an eight.

Suspension & tracks

Motorization holes aside, the suspension goes together without any glitches. The lower hull doesn't have the fine detail of the AFV kit, but the road wheels are more correct regarding their depth. The idler wheels look a little thick and the shock absorbers and their mountings are simplified when compared to the AFV kit. Academy gives you a choice of rubber band or link and length tracks. I used the rubber band tracks and they worked just fine. This should make both sides of the great track debate happy. With everything in place and the side shields mounted, I was pleased with the end result. I'll give a little extra credit here for the track option.

Suspension & tracks gets a seven.

Upper hull

As I said earlier some filling will be required when joining the upper and lower hull at the front glacis joint and there were a few sink marks that needed some love. Rather than using locating holes for the mounting of the tools, a raised outline of the item is molded on the hull. I sanded these off and eyeballed their locations. The level of detail on the tools was very good. The .50 cal. tripod looked much more accurate than AFV's does. This is the easiest part of the kit, unless you want to fix those screens.

Score: seven.

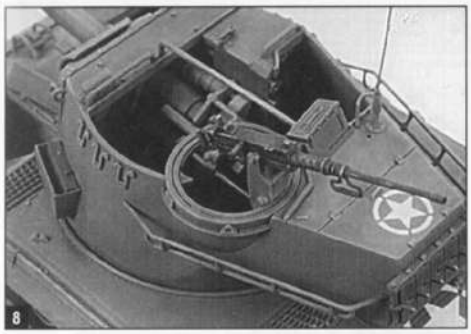
Turret

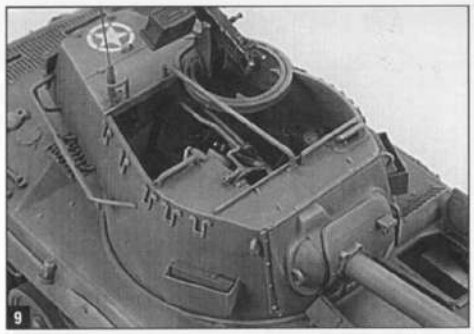
Being an open topped turret, most of the work is on the interior. Here again Academy has done a pretty good job. The gun elevation wheel is not present, nor are the hydraulic lines for the turret traverse mechanism. You have the option of using a radio or a stowage bin to fill the turret bustle. The radio made more sense to me. There's plenty of room here for super detailing. The loaders ready racks are a little on the thick side, but Academy provides half rounds to stuff in the holes. The exterior of the turret includes the prominent horseshoe shaped brackets used to tie down personnel gear.

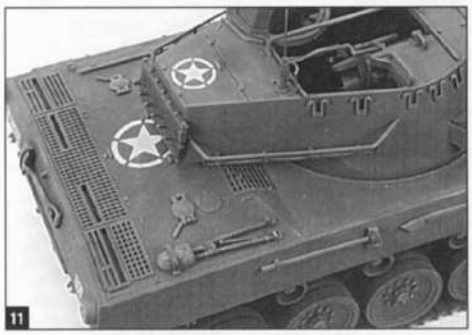
Score: seven.

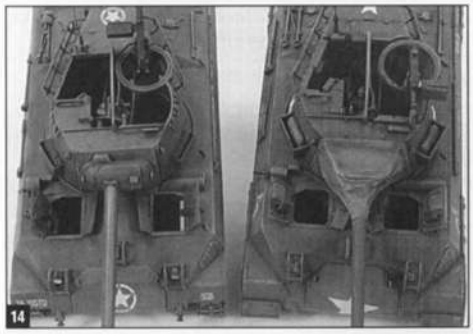
Markings

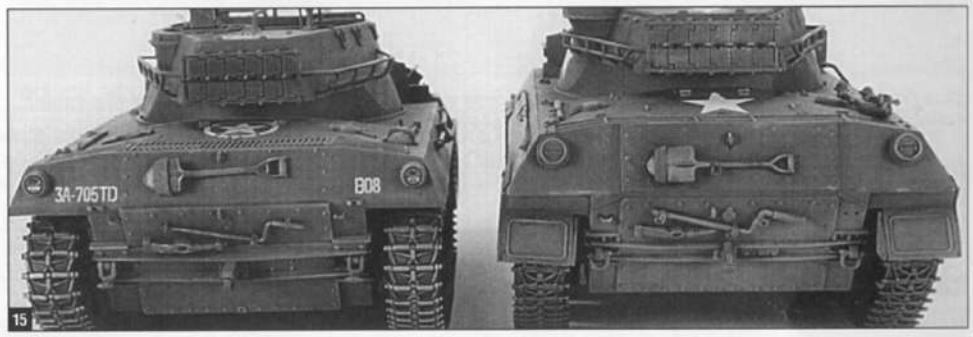
Markings are supplied for two vehicles. I DON'T WANT A (nude babe), France 1944 and DOROTHY, Germany 1944. The stars for the turret sides are too big, so I opted for dry transfers for all the stars. Like I says, I LIKED THE NUDE BABE. After a good coat of Aeromaster gloss, I applied the remaining decals.











The decals required a heavy dousing of setting solution. Even after another coat of gloss there was still some silvering. The decals are just too thick. Maybe the Gods of modeling were pissed at me because I used plane stuff. Just kidding.

The score here is six.

Overall

I was not too disappointed with the end result. Yes, the kit has its quirks, but with some extra effort a good model could be had. This would be a good kit for a younger modeler to attempt as a first opened-topped vehicle being that everything went together pretty well. Not bad. Score: seven.

Total Academy: 73

AFV Club Hellcat, first impressions

It is not often that you get the chance to compare two kits side by side. With all the hype going on about this kit, I was anxious to get started.

The Hellcat was built in Flint Michigan about 20 minutes from where I live. A friend of mine who works at Buick says he finds parts like road wheels still lying around the plant once in a while.

My first impression was that, indeed this is a very nice kit. The parts are nicely detailed and very well molded.

I was immediately drawn to the advertised brass barrel, which was somewhat disappointing. It is actually a brass tube that is only tapered about the last third of the way down it's length.

Whenever a new U.S. armor kit comes out I always check the quality of the pioneer tools. I was impressed with the sprue that contained the tow cable ends, tools, and .50 cal MG with tripod. I thought this would make a great accessory set, especially with that nice .50 cal.

The kit does have the correct engine grills that everyone was waiting for, although they are a bit on the thick side and the frame work that surrounds them could be a little wider.

I noticed that the headlight guards were overly thick and that many of the weld seams were missing, which really stand out on the full size Cat. A minor note is the early gun lock on a later M18.

Overall my first impression was high, even the sponsons were filled and that is a plus in my book.

I give First Impression a nine out of ten.

Accuracy

After comparing this kit to the Academy kit, I feel that AFV/Club has more accurately captured the low sleek look of the Hellcat. There are large differences between the two kits and I tried to show this with the accompanying photos.

I give it a seven for accuracy.

Kit Quality

The quality of the parts is very nice and the model assembles quite easily with very little filler.

The instruction sheet is questionable even with the revision sheet that was provided. After I noticed the wrong placement of a few parts I did not trust the instructions any longer. I removed some of the location pins and mounted things according to my reference photos. I highly recommend a photo reference when building this kit.

Many of the parts do not fit the locating holes so be sure and dry fit each part before gluing.

I give the kit an eight for quality.

Options

The kit can only be modeled with the later muzzle brake gun barrel. It would have been nice to have a choice, as most of the WWII M18's did not use the muzzle brake for fear of being mistaken as a German vehicle.

There is no option for a mantlet cover either and most of the M18's I have seen have mantlet covers. The mantlet is nicely detailed though, right down to the casting numbers, but don't miss that sink hole over there on the left.

I give a seven on the options, I felt they could have given up a few more goodies like bed rolls, tarps and packs.

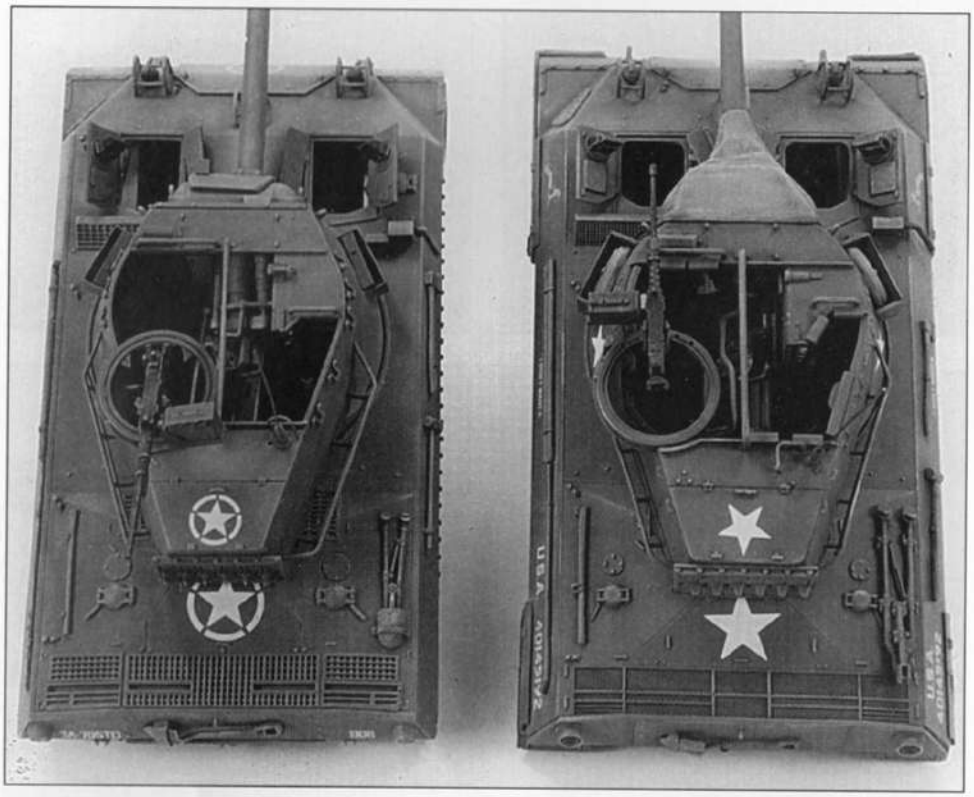
Interior

The driver and co driver positions are disappointing. Two seats and a very plain transmission are all that is provided. So there will be many things to add if you are so inclined. A nicely detailed dashboard is provided though and this helps ease the pain a little.

Steering control levers or foot pedals are not included.

The sponson mounted ready racks and 76mm rounds are nice. It's a shame though, you can hardly see them when the kit is fully assembled. The mounting holes for the racks go through the hull sponsons so if you are a little bit fussy, you will need to fill the six locating points underneath the sponsons. This kind of reminds me of motorization holes, only in the sponsons, not the lower hull.

The fighting compartment is very nice and well detailed.



This final view shows the differences in overall size as well as the .50 cal tripod, fuel filler cap, engine grills and access plates next to the fuel caps. AFV Club on the left, Academy on the right.

I give the interior an eight because of the nice fighting compartment.

Suspension & Tracks

The suspension assembles quite well, although there are a few sticky points along the way. One area is with parts B38 and B39 in step 3. They should be reversed.

I left the idler arms and sprocket mounts loose until I mounted the track. I guess I was a little bit nervous.

The suspension looks very nice when finished, but the tracks end up too close to the hull sponsons. It appears that this can only be corrected by raising the hull above the return rollers, as the relationship between the return rollers and road wheels seems to be fine. At any rate, without having a full scale M18 to measure I can only speculate.

I really like the new material AFV/Club is using with their vinyl tracks. They go together very well with super glue or liquid cement. I still like individual track links better, but for a vehicle like the Hellcat, which runs tight track, these are fine.

I give the Suspension & Tracks a six.

Upper hull

When I thought I was finished with assembly, I noticed that I had a few lift rings left over and this made me a little suspicious. Once I checked my references, I found the location marks on the hull although they were not mentioned in the instructions. Two of these hooks, part C7, belong on each side of the transmission access plate and the last one belongs at the top of the rear engine access hatch, just above the shovel.

The tow rope supplied in the kit is very nice, but mine was two inches too short.

The forward hatches are molded together, so if you want to model them open you will need to cut them in half. The hatches are nicely detailed on the inside surface. While we are on the subject of the forward hatches, I want to mention that mine were too long and rest against the turret when posed open. I cut back the rear edge some, which allowed the turret to turn without rubbing. Those who want to make a mantlet cover with epoxy putty or whatever may have trouble in this area.

The access hatch part (B20) in step 12 appeared to me to be too close to the rear most edge so I trimmed off the locator on the backside and moved it forward a bit.

The .50 cal tripod is nicely detailed but much too small, especially when compared to Academy's kit.

The fuel filler cap for the auxiliary generator is backwards, according to photos I have seen. No big deal, just trim off the locator and turn it around.

I decided to leave the side fenders off to give a more "in battle" look to the old Cat, but I want to mention here that the side fenders did fit and look very well.

I give the Upper hull a seven.

Turret

The turret looks good and has most of the major fittings inside. There is a nice ready rack on the right hand side, and when thinned out looks very good. A couple of extra rounds are provided to display in the rack.

The left side of the turret interior is quite bare and no gun control fittings are provided.

The bins on the side of the turret, which hold the inclement weather hoods, look very good when thinned out, but the inclement weather hoods themselves are missing the canvas covers. The Academy kit has this detail.

The gun barrel has a metal spring, which goes inside the breach area and allows the barrel to spring in and out of the mantlet. This detail does not even qualify for discussion. If anyone needs a spring, I have an extra.

There are no headache pads provided, as in the Academy kit.

I give the turret a seven.

Markings

Eight different unit markings are provided, R.O.C., N.W. Europe, and Italian. The decals are very thin and very delicate. Once they are placed on the model they are not easily moved. (I actually ruined the serial number decals on the rear sides of the hull and substituted decals from a different model, just so you know they are not from this kit.) Once the decals are on the model they are very nice.

I give the decals an eight.

Note: I added transmission drive shafts and U-joints, gauge details, antenna, hatch handles and MV lenses, so if any of these show up in the photos, they did not come in the kit.

Overall

Overall the kit assembles well and looks good, although it does have a few annoyances. The model differs quite a bit from the Academy kit.

Aside from the lack of space between the track and sponsons, the finished kit provides that low, lean and mean look of the long awaited U.S. M18 Hellcat. The nicely detailed fighting compartment and beautiful .50cal mg really set her off.

I give the kit a seventy-nine out of one hundred because of the space between the track and sponsons.

Overview

We hope that the photos and captions will aid you in making your decision. Both of these kits were brought to one of our club meetings and the reactions were very interesting. Most of the guys had made up their minds just from the reputations of the two different manufacturers. When the kits were side by side it was clear that they were totally different. The Academy looked a little large and the AFV was noticeably small and no one seemed to know which was right. So the debate rages on and will surely continue for some time. Each kit has its pluses and minuses. Hopefully you will choose the one that's for you. Most guys bought 'em both anyhow.

—Nick Vanston (Academy) & Barry Beaudry (AFV Club)

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Academy/Minicraft M18 Hellcat. Kit number 1375. Suggested retail price $32.00.

AFV Club M18 Hellcat Tank Destroyer. Kit number 35015. Kit graciously provided by AFV Club's U.S. importer, Marco Polo Imports. Suggested retail price $29.98.

References

U.S. Tank Destroyers in action. Armor Number 36 by Jim Mesko, Squadron Signal Publications, 1998. ISBN: 0-89747-385-X. Just recently released, this bargain priced book offers it all: good photos, line drawings and color plates.

U.S. Tank Destroyers in Combat 1941-1945 by Steven J. Zaloga, Concord Publications Co., 1996. ISBN: 962-361-609-0. Pretty much the same deal as above, but with very little duplication in the photos and color plates. An inexpensive one-two punch for your library.

Stuart, A History of the American Light Tank, Volume 1 by R.P. Hunnicutt, Presidio Press, 1992. ISBN: 0-89141-462-2. This thick book contains a brief, but exceedingly thorough section on the Hellcat and some of its derivatives like the M39.

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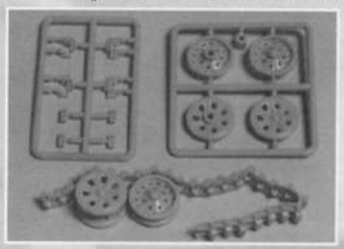

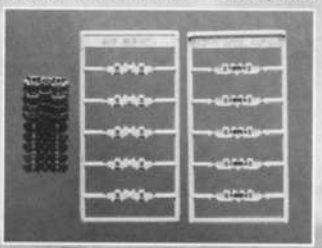

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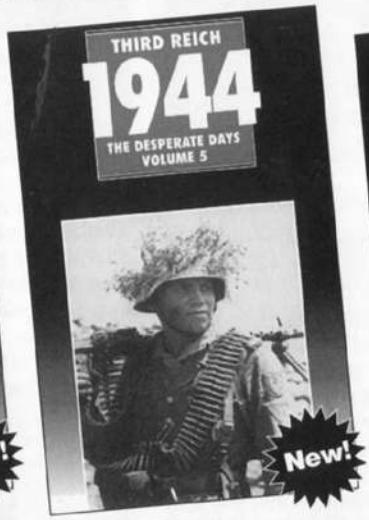

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That's Mr. T to you, pal

The spanking new and improved T34 kit from Dragon Models

Hello my name is Randy and I'm a T34aholic. It's been six years since my last T34, but BABY I'M ABOUT TO FALL OFF THE WAGON! At one time, long ago in my modeling career, I built nothing but the T34. All of them, of course, Tamiya. A couple of years ago, we started to see a flicker of interest reemerge with Zvesda and Maquette releasing different variants. However, I couldn't get the old magic back. They didn't interest me. The love affair was over... Or was it???

More or less out of the blue, DML released a totally retooled and brand new T34 kit. No matter how hard I tried to resist, it beckoned to me, "Randy come build me, see the accuracy of my hull, my roadwheel spacing." I was a goner.

You know all about the real life T34, right? Most numerous tank of WW2, several different variants, extensive post-war service, yadda, yadda, yadda. Let's talk styrene, shall we?.

I am born

The original T34 from Tamiya goes back a long way. It was one of their first armor kits and all the subsequent kits were more or less based on this original version. We're talkin' twenty-five years ago, man. Tamiya did some interesting things with it, releasing three variants of the T34/76 (the last one only about six years ago) and three assault guns. The big problem with the Tamiya kit was that it was originally intended to be motorized and as such had gaping holes all along the bottom and a big ol' slot above the drive sprocket for the motor axle.

All of the old Tamiya kits were intended to be as accurate as possible, but concessions were always made to accommodate that nasty little motor. Amazingly, in spite of two re releases in the early nineties they never addressed this problem.

Well fuggettaboudit now, DML is in town. Not one, but two new kits are now available and more are to follow this year.

The first thing you notice is that the kit's lower hull is broken down just like the real thing. The Christie type suspension is represented with the springs housed in boxes along the inside of the hull. These can be seen through slots in the hull. One could easily modify these to actually function. (I'm dizzy).

The lower hull is fully detailed throughout with access plates, track pin bumpers and a wonderfully rendered final drive housing.

I'd suggest letting the spring housings dry before adding the suspension arms. This will ensure a level sit of your model.

The wheels provided are the "spider" type with the spokes and the pierced hub. The tires even have manufacturer's marks. I liked them.

Through extensive scientific research and a few well placed darts, I determined that this is indeed a model 1944, so these wheels are quite appropriate. Also appropriate would be the solid dished wheels.

Some jamokes around here (who shall remain nameless) have questioned the accuracy of the roadwheel spacing. It is correct. If you look at photos of the real T34, you'll notice that the rear drive sprocket almost kisses the last roadwheel. It doesn't actually touch, but it's only an inch or so away. You'll also notice that the last three roadwheels also are quite close together, with the first two having slightly more space between them. And finally, the second and third roadwheels have a pronounced gap, greater than all the others. This is all reflected in the kit.

I believe the source of the confusion is the plans printed in the Zaloga books on the T34 (he's written 1,439 of them). Even in his latest, his plans show a large gap between the last roadwheel and the drive sprocket, as well as slightly more space between the last three wheels. Comparison with any of the photos will show that the kit is spot on.

And now back to our show

For some reason, the front lower hull panel is separate. No biggie, but I suspect it has something to do with future variants.

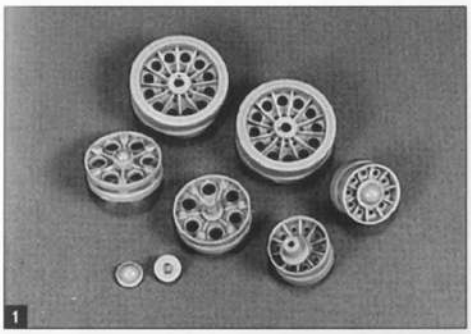
I had no trouble mating the hull halves, although some of my buddies that were working on the kit at the same time said they had trouble, especially at the back of the hull. There was a slight gap in mine, but this can be easily worked under the sponsons where it is all but invisible.

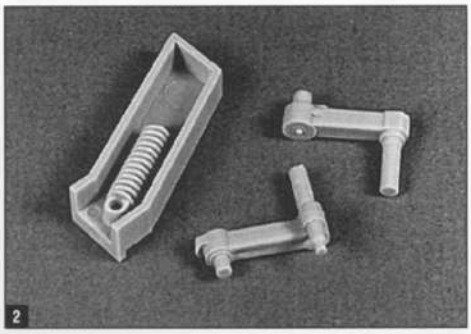
The rear upper hull has all kind of yawning gaps that are yearning to be plugged with the new Jaguar interior sets. Unlike Tamiya, both sets of engine grills are separate pieces allowing for all manner of after market goofing around.

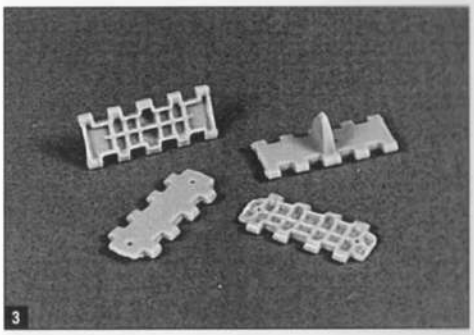
Surprisingly, the large rear deck screen is molded on. I would have thought with DML's excursions into photo-etch that it would have been provided.

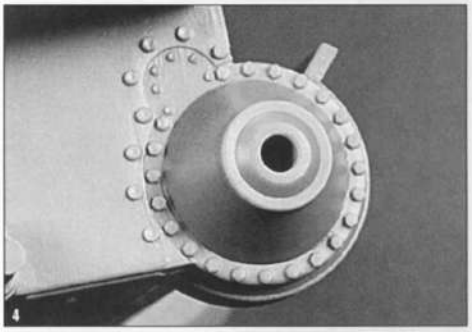
A whole grab bag of other detail parts are provided for the upper hull, such as tow cable heads, spare track links, ice cleats, towing eyes, a saw, properly accurate side mounted fuel drums and even a clear part for the side light. This kit is one of DML's first to provide a set of tow cables. Way to go!

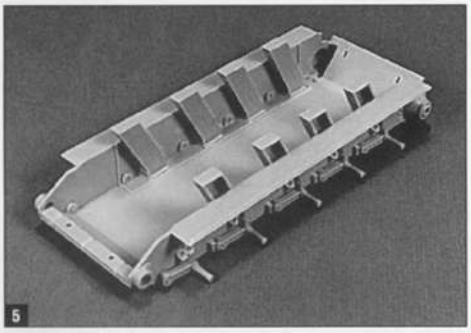
Not all of this stuff appears on every vehicle. Some of the 1944 tanks were rebuilt from 1943 models and fittings also tended to differ from factory to factory. Check those references.

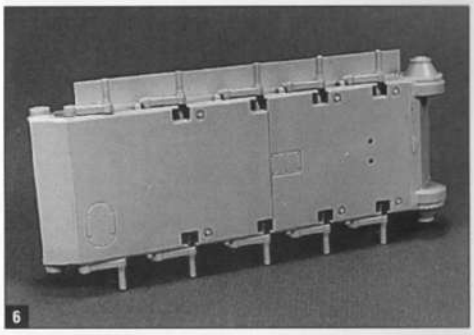


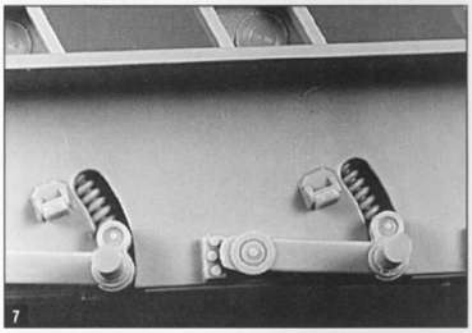


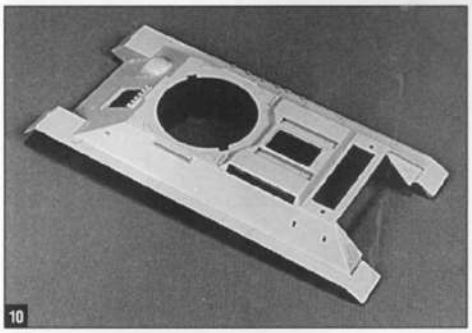


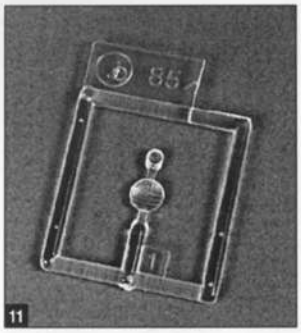












1. The basic drive train components. Roadwheels, drive sprockets (below them) and the idler wheels to the right. The roadwheel hubs are separate. Also note that the idler wheels have a cam shape to aid in positioning the tracks. This will also help when the link-to-link after market sets kick in. 2. The roadwheel arms and their interior spring housings. 3. The two types of track links. 4. The absolutely beautifully detailed final drive housing. 5. The completed spring housings—just like the real deal. 6. The hull bottom is fully detailed. Note the correct cut-outs for the spring arms. 7. A close up of those cut-outs. Not easy to see when the kit is finished, but you'll know they're there! 8. The detailed and textured turret. Nice job. 9. The turret roof. The cover for the mantlet is a bit shy. 10. The upper hull is properly perforated for the after market crowd. Yippee! 11. Clear parts—on a tank? Yep. In what may be a first, DML gives you a lens for the front driver's light.

Along these same lines, the tank is depicted with the square front fenders. Most of the photos that show this variant with fenders, show it with the earlier rounded fenders. I have seen the square ones with this turret, but the round ones are just more common in photos.

Summer of '44

The heart and soul of this variant is the turret. It is the so-called "flattened" model turret with the two ventilator covers squashed together on the roof. DML did a bang-up job with all the texturing and detail work. All the little fillets and marks of the version are present. They even went so far as to add a separate block for one of the welded sections near the mantlet.

Assembly is super simple, but I made sure to use a sufficient amount of liquid glue in constructing the main parts that there was enough to squish out to seal any minor gaps. You don't want to be taking sandpaper to that beautifully textured part.

DML thoughtfully provided a small chart to illustrate the placement of the u-shaped handles on the back of the turret.

The cover that sits above the mantlet is just a bit too far back on the turret roof. It should just cover the edge of the mantlet. Not catastrophic.

On track

Like all DML kits, this one has individual links. The T34 used a two piece link and those represented are the late waffle type pattern. The fit was pretty good, but the design of links (double-link, male/female) makes it difficult to keep the runs straight.

I built the tracks right on to the tank which is not my prefferred method. It makes for trick painting later on.

I painted the model overall Humbrol 117 US Light Green. This is actually a darker shade of medium green that I think represents Soviet green well. I used the color mostly straight, but did add some lighter over sprays on the engine deck and turret.

I weathered my tank with a coat of black artist's gauche suspended in Future floor wax. This creates an excellent surface for decals. DML provides several interesting schemes for the tank on of which is vehicle 145 nick-named "Chervonets." This is printed in large letters on both sides of the turret. This is slang for a ten-ruble note, something like saying "buck" or "quid." I decided to use a scheme from the 126th Tank Regiment of the 6th Gaurds Mechanized Corps. It represents a tank of Lt. Kashinkov who was a "hero of the Soviet Union." Sounds good to me (I'd rather be that than a Hero of the Soviet Onion). The side inscription is "Mat Rodina," or "For the Motherland."

The scheme also comes with some interesting kill marks for the gun barrel. You don't see this much on a Russian tank.

In addition to what DML supplies, you have a lot of options. VP makes two excellent sheets for the

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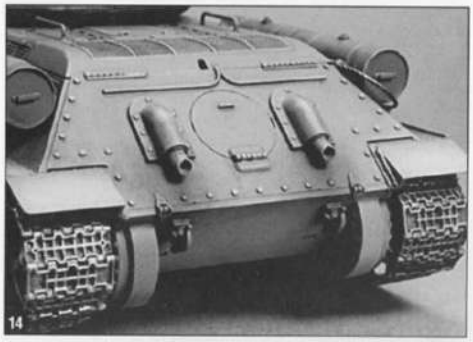
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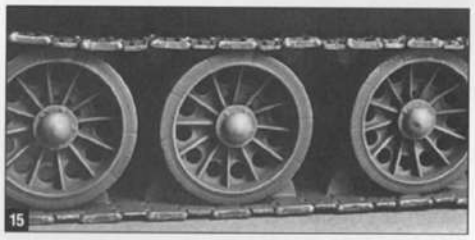
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12. DML supplies a full set of on-board gear for this model. It may not all be appropriate for your particular model. Check your references. 13. The front end. DML got all the little details right. The Tamiya kit never came close. I left off the spare tracks to show off the detail. Check out the texture on the hull MG port. This item often differed in shape depending on when and where the vehicle was manufactured. Two examples are shown at right. This would be an interesting detail to work into your model. 14. The back end. The large round hatch is a separate item which is yet another way to get a peek at any installed after market goodies. 15. Those great roadwheels. How 'bout those tire markings? Another rarity in an armor kit. These wheels are suitable for pilfering for T54 projects. 16, 17. Front and rear views of the turret roof. Those mashed together ventilator covers are a distinguishing feature of the 1944 production "flattened" turret. The small lift rings on the back are thoughtfully provided in styrene.18. The textured mantlet. Also seen here is the MG port. 19. Another shot of the turret roof. The commander's cupola is very sharply detailed. Good stuff. 20. The back deck. The large rectangular screen is solid which was a little disappointing. The view of the engine louvers underneath is quite clear at almost all angles. A dark wash helps bring it out.

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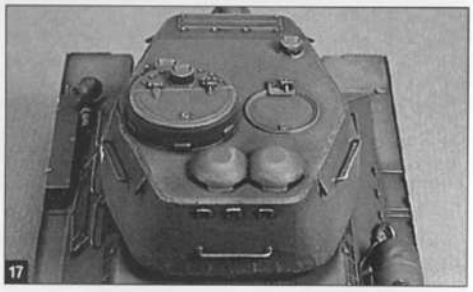
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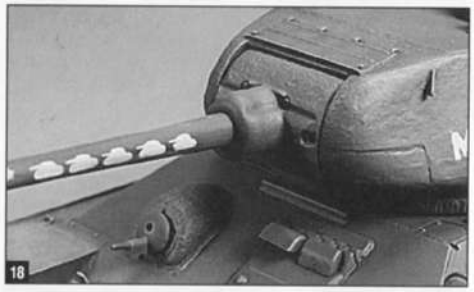
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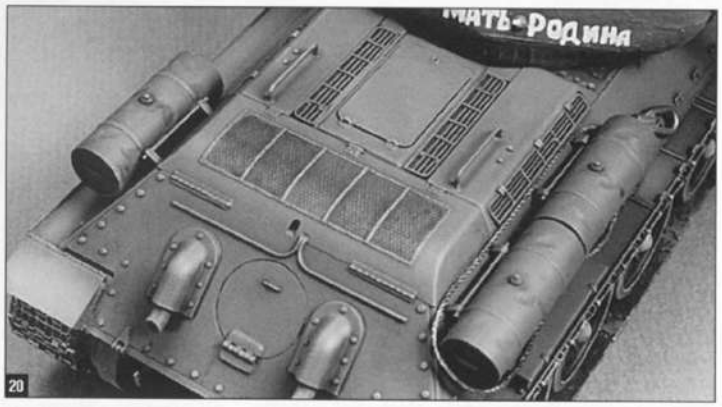

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T34 and there are several other after market decal sets.

The kit was finished with a flat coat and a bit of dusting with pastels around the lower area of the hull.

I'm glad to have the T34 back in shops. I'm afraid I got the Soviet monkey on my back again! I look forward to the next several kits. Released concurrent with this kit was a T34/85M, which is a post war rebuild. DML has depicted an NVA vehicle and includes the T-54/T-55 "Starfish" type wheels.

An SU-85, SU-100 and a T34/76 model 1943 have already been announced. The way the kit was laid out indicated perhaps even more kits than that. It looks like I'll have plenty to feed the habit.

There were few negative aspects to this kit and I commend DML for their high level of accuracy and detailing.

—Randy Johnson

MMiR RECCE

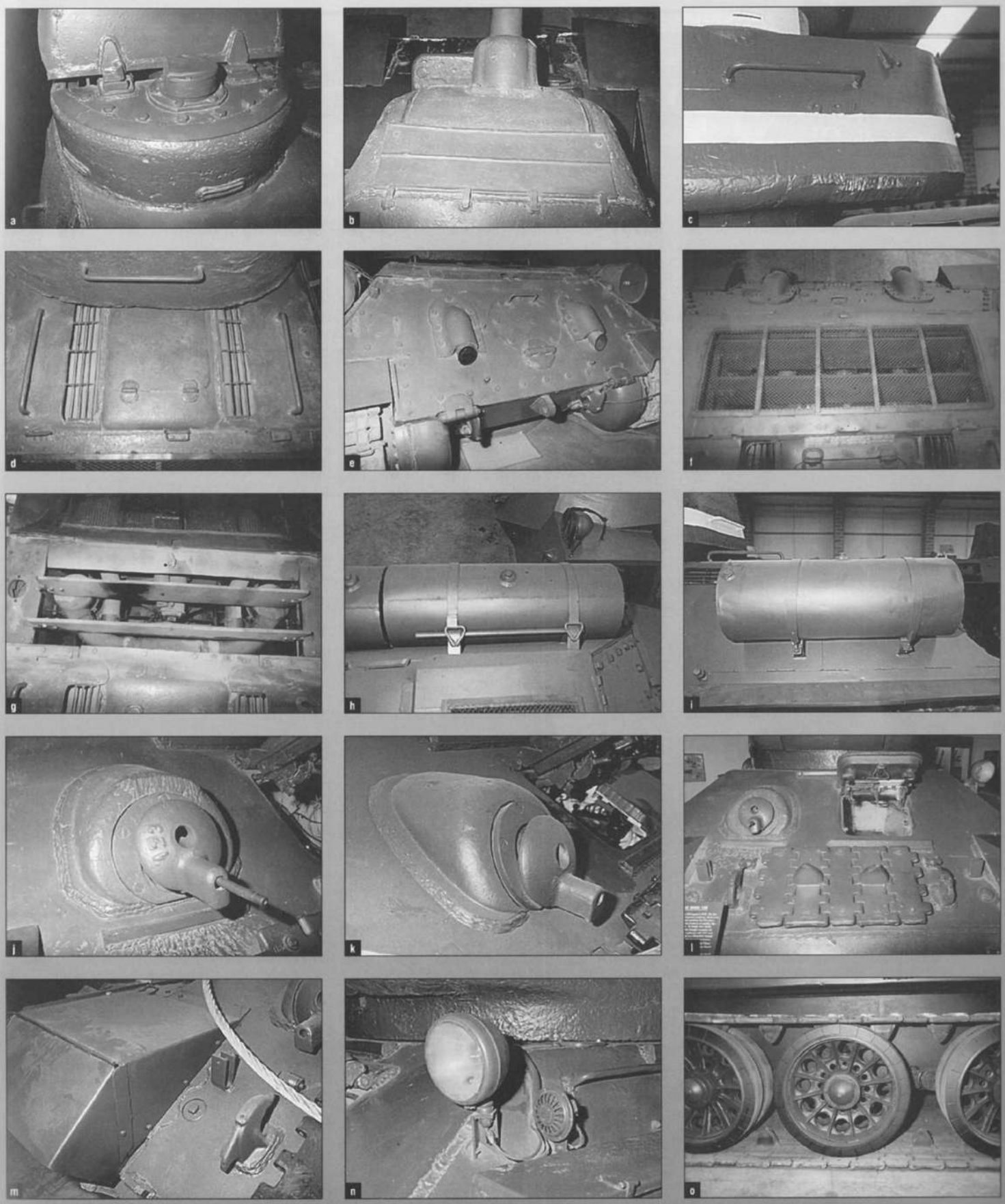
Dragon Models Limited T34/85 Mod. 1944. Kit number 6066. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail $29.98. Not reviewed but also now available is **NVA T-34/85M.** Kit number 3318. Suggested retail $29.98.

References

T-34-85 Medium Tank 1944-1994, by Steven Zaloga & Jim Kinnear, Osprey New Vanguard 20, Osprey 1996. ISBN: 1-85532-535-7. One of Stevie Z's latest, it contains much of the current data available on the later models of the tank. Great photos and color plates, but generally ignore the roadwheels in those line drawings. Number 9, on the T-34/76 is also available.

Soviet Tanks in Combat 1941-1945. The T-28, T-34, T-34-85 and T-44 Medium Tanks by Steven J. Zaloga, Concord Publications, 1997. ISBN: 962-361-615-5. Good stuff. Packed with T34 photos of all the variants. All the photos are clear and large. Color plates, too.

T-34 in action, Armor No. 20, Squadron/Signal Publications 1981, ISBN 0-89747-112-1. Old, but still pretty good to have around. What I like most about it is the tremendous selection of photos representing dozens of variants and sub-variants. Great drawings and explanations of the production changes.



The following are photos of two different T34/85s. One is the Ft. Knox vehicle which is an immediate post-war rebuild of a WW2 vehicle. This tank was used and later captured in Korea. The other T34 is a newer 1950's version restored (and for sale) at the Budge collection in England. The differences in production quality will be evident. a) The commander's cupola of the earlier vehicle. Very rough. b) The mantlet of the same tank. c) A very interesting casting mark on the Budge T34. d) The back deck of the early tank. e) The back plate of the same tank. Note the rounded shape of the final drive housings. f) The late engine hatch. The louvers are obvious. This is the 1950's tank. g) The same area on the Korean War tank with the hatch flipped up. h, i) Top and bottom views of the auxiliary fuel drums on the 1950's vehicle. j, k) A very interesting point of contrast between the early tank (j) and the later one (k). l) The front end of the earlier T34 showing the various fittings. m) The inner fender details of the later vehicle. n) The light and sirens of the Ft. Knox tank. o) A good view of the segmented tires. This detail is present on the DML kit. This is the Budge T34.

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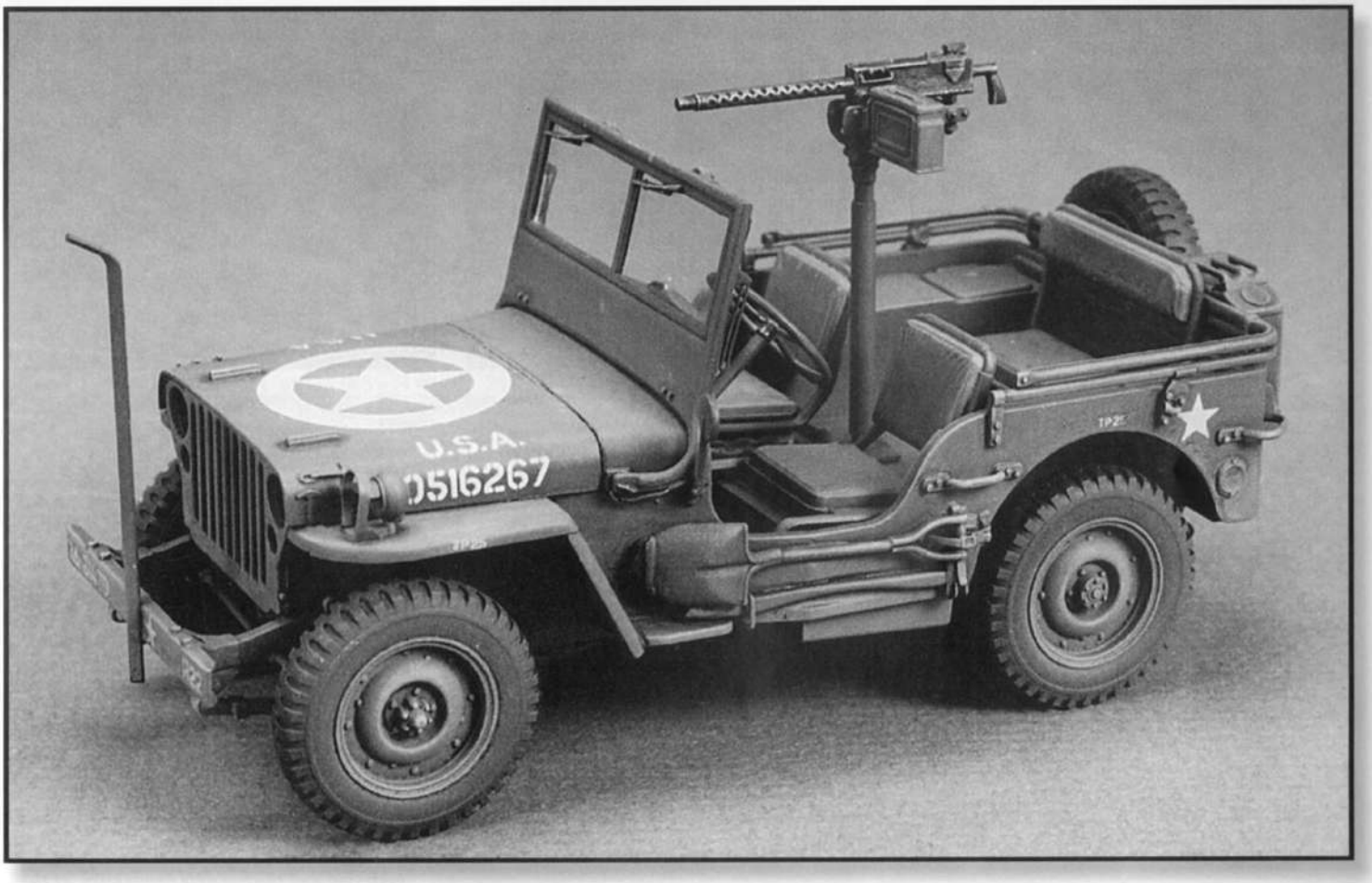
Where'd you get that kit? Tamiya revises another classic in OD plastic



You know about the Jeep, right? About a jillion of them were produced during the war (you know, WW2—it was in all the papers) and even more later. The Jeep was originally to be mass-produced by a smallish company called Willys Motors who beat out motoring giant Ford to get a big Army contract for a 1/4-ton 4x4. In a slight twist of irony, Willys was unable to meet the demands of the contract, so FoMoCo was brought back into the production. The slight retooling to the grill area by Ford created the final design that we have come to know and love.

The origins of the name "Jeep" are still being argued about. It most likely is a derivation of the initials "GP" for General Purpose. WW2 vets will tell you that this was first used in reference to the Dodge 3/4-ton off-road car. The smaller Willys/Ford vehicle was referred to as a "Peep." At any rate, I'll be calling it a Jeep throughout.

The Jeep has been a civilian mainstay since surplus vehicles were sold-off after the war. Later, a civilian version was created especially for this market and it was christened "CJ" for Civilian Jeep. Interestingly, this design was eventually worked back into a mil-spec version that was known as the M38. The redesigned M38A1 was basically the later civilian CJ5 that is still a common sight on American roads today. New CJ5s are no longer made, because that basic design was chopped up several years ago to lower the center of gravity and address complaints that the vehicle was too easy to tip over. Willys eventually melted into American Motors. AMC also finally faded away and today's Jeeps are part of the Chrysler empire. But that grill design lives on and on (by the way, check out all that Chrysler copyright stuff on the Tamiya box).

But enough of that stuff, let's get down to brass tacks. A few years ago there were rumors that Tamiya was going to re-tool all of its older "Military Miniatures" line. Those rumors became a reality with the release of the Tiger IIs, the Panthers, the Sherman, the Kübelwagen and finally our friend: the Jeep (the Schwimmwagen is next).

Now Tamiya already had a Jeep kit (complete with trailer and figures) and the Italeri kit is pretty sound and available in at least three versions. Did Tamiya really do something fresh when they released this kit? I think they did. Let's take a closer look.

Off-road plastic

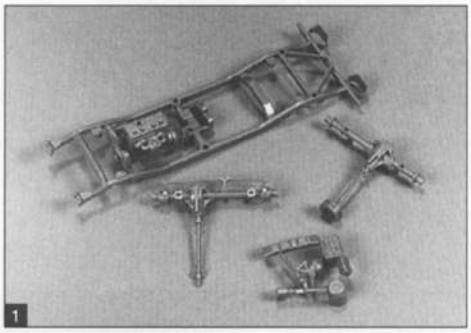
The first thing I noticed about this kit is that Tamiya has brought all its famous molding technology to bear on this teeny little model. Like its bigger brother the GMC truck, many of the more complex sub assemblies are rendered as single pieces. Perhaps the most noticeable in the box is the body pan. This consists of pretty much the entire upper body, minus the hood and interior.

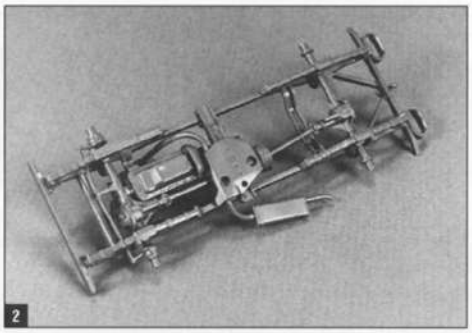
A full engine is included and this is basically five pieces. All the little fiddly bits are added last as one complex part.

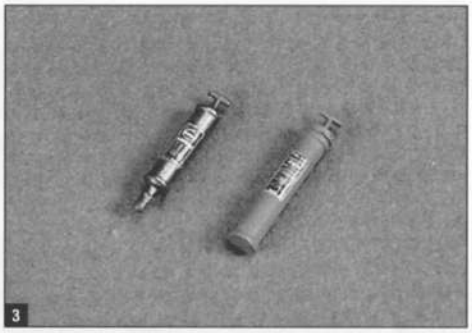
The suspension is quite simple as well (with terrific detail), but the drive train is two parts and not one like the truck. The entire kit was so simple in fact, that I had it ready to paint in only an hour.

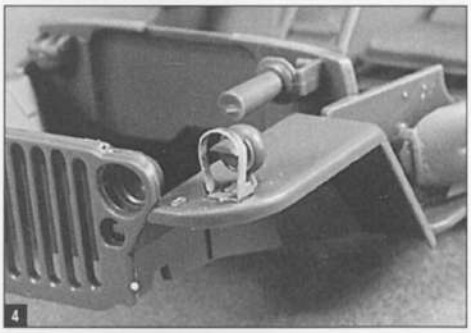
The detail really sings out on this kit. The seats are beautifully detailed and their texture is right on the money. Other areas worthy of mention are finely detailed wheels and hubs, the crisply molded back panel tail lights, interior fire extinguisher, neat little windshield wiper motors and the positively lovely to behold .30-cal. pedestal MG and cradle.

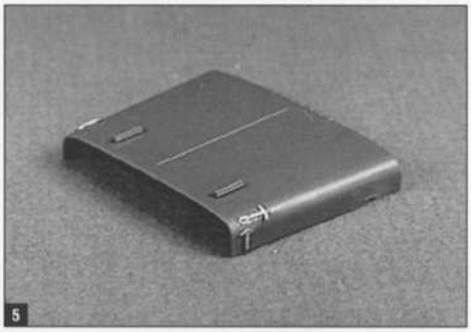
There were a few deficiencies, or rather omissions, that truly surprised me. The kit is so small I figured Tamiya would want to linger here and there to add all kinds of detail. The biggest omission is those little spring loaded T-hooks found on the hood. There should be four of them. Two hold down the hood and the other two hold down the

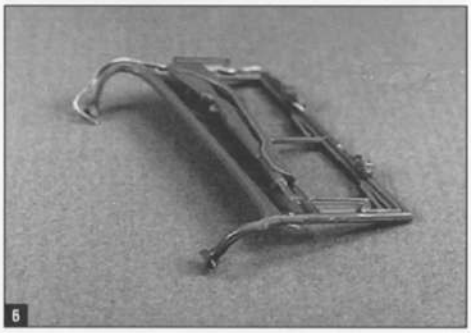


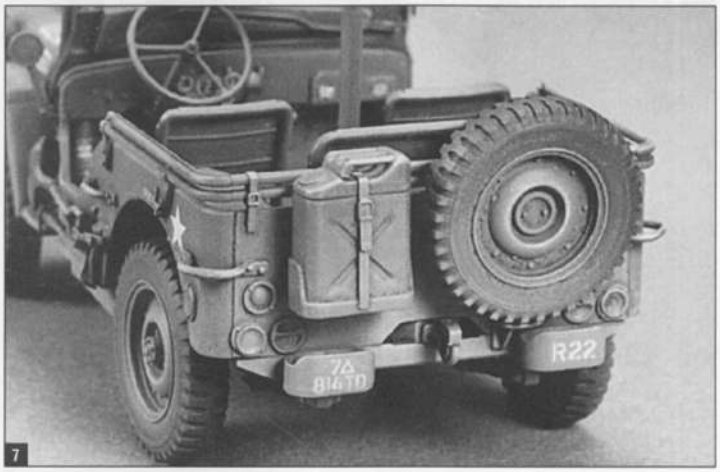


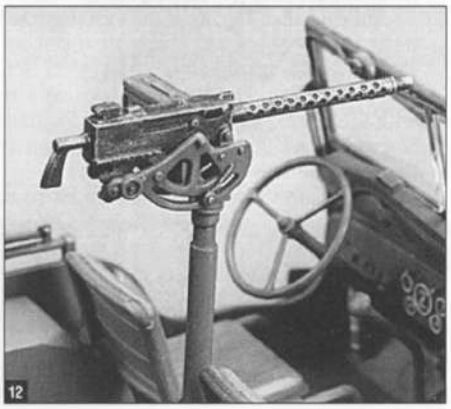












1. Simple stuff. The frame with the engine installed and the two axle assemblies. At the bottom of the photo is the one piece assembly for the top of the engine. Thanks guys! 2. The bottom of the completed chassis. It's almost a shame to sit the thing on its tires. 3. These are the two "devices" that install forward in the cab. Tamiya provided beautiful little decal placards for each. 4. This is the replacement light guard on the left front fender provided in the TWS photo-etched set. It's not mentioned in the text, but the small object just to the left of the guard is the base plate for the spring hook. I used the tops of German box clasps from an Eduard set for all of them. 5. The spring hooks installed on the hood and their base plates. 6. The photo-etched windshield hinge from the TWS set. 7. The back end. The gas can has a strap end from the TWS set, but there were not enough to do the straps on the roof bows. 8. The finished front end. I added the two bolts on each side of the frame girders that attach the front bumper. 9. The TWS set dresses up the tool areas quite well. There was a hook and a strap that held on the ax and then the shovel was strapped over that. 10. The finished dash board. I left the edges of the gauges white to show them off a little more, but they were actually OD. 11. The finished engine. A very neat installation. 12. One of the nicest parts of the kit: the rear mounted .30 cal MG. I'll be stealing this for other projects. It's one of the best I've seen in either plastic or resin.

windshield in its lowered position. This was particularly shocking because even present day civilian Jeeps still use these (even my old 1975 Toyota Land Cruiser had 'em).

Well, Tank Workshop to the rescue. They and their Japanese partners at Ordinance Models have released a small photo-etched sheet which includes these little buggers. I used all four and also succumbed to their little attachment assembly for the shovel/ax combo on the right hand side of the Jeep. Also used were the windshield lever arms and the gas can strap.

I also added a few nuts and bolts using my punch and die sets (Historex and Waldron respectively). I only added those that were really obvious such as the nuts that attached the front fender and the bolts used to secure the side and rear grab handles.

Paint Me

I left the Jeep in sub assemblies to paint it. These were the engine and frame, the body pan minus the seats and the wheels. For color I used a basic dark OD lightened with subsequent over sprays.

Tamiya's decals are perfectly printed but I always find them a bit thick. Solvaset takes care of this problem for the most part, but I still think that if you look really close, you can pick out the raised area of the film. Dry transfers are not much of an option here. The most commonly available VP sets contain numbers more suited for trucks and tanks than the diminutive Jeep.

The Tamiya sheet does include many cool items, such as the tire pressure markings and instruction plaques for the dashboard and the fire extinguishers.

I went after the 7th Armored Division scheme from the 814th TD Battalion Recon Co. in January 1945. I wanted to depict a newer replacement vehicle. I figured it wouldn't be too beat-up, but that the yucky weather would dirty it up pretty quickly.

This vehicle calls for two of several options Tamiya provides. I added the wire cutting device to the front fender and added the MG mount to the rear (a .50 cal in the back of a Jeep is pretty much the realm of fantasy—the gun would practically knock the little Jeep over). Other options include a tow bar, an interior hinge for the hood (to display it open), a convoy commanders placard for a "Red Ball Express" vehicle (big time GMC truck tie-in!) and my favorite: the Tommy gun holster.

I painted the interior of the headlights silver, then added the clear lens parts using Micro Krystal Klear as an adhesive. This was also used for attaching the windshield glass. I like using this stuff because it dries without a trace, where plain 'ol Elmers sometimes leaves a little residue.

Final weathering was done with careful over sprays of Polly-Scale Flat mixed with Armor Dark Yellow using a ratio of about 3:1. The flat coat is clear and the addition of the paint creates a nice semi-opaque coating that simulates dust very well. It has to be applied in very light coats in order to let the color build-up.

Drive Me

And so that's it. I dug the kit. It was very, very easy to build and quick to boot. I like the idea of cranking out a few of them for a diorama. The quick basic construction also leaves even more opportunity for super detailing, should you choose to use the time that way. I was a little disappointed over the few missing details, but even Tamiya hasn't released a perfect kit (yet!).

—Ken Dugan

MMiR RECCE

Tamiya Jeep Willys MB 1/4-ton 4x4 truck. Kit number 35219. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail $18.00.

The Tank Workshop Jeep Details. Kit number TTWA 0063. Kit graciously provided by the manufacturer. Suggested retail $6.75.

References

There are many books about U.S. military vehicles that include photos of the Jeep and just about every book on WW2 has one picture or another. Like the GMC, the Jeep is well covered by the military vehicle restoration crowd. Here are just a couple titles.

Standard Catalog of U.S. Military Vehicles 1940-1965, by Thomas Berndt, Krause Publications 1993. ISBN: 0-87341-223-0. This highly useful hard cover book includes great shots of all the early Jeeps with several close-up interior shots. The cover also has a nice close-up of the dash. Our copy is a few years old and subsequent reprints may differ slightly.

Essential Military Jeep, Willys, Ford and Bantam Models 1942-45 by Graham Scott, Bay View Books 1996. ISBN: 1-870979-76-1. This eighty page book packs in over 120 photos. A good deal at $14.95.

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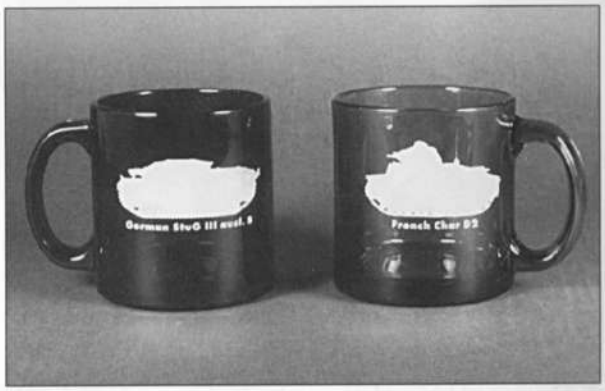

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Wild Wiesel

AFV Club gnaws it's way in with this spunky little rodent in white styrene.

The German Wiesel 1 Mk 20 and its counterpart the Wiesel 1 TOW finally came into production in 1990 after many years of development. The Bundeswehr (West German Army) required these vehicles to be "airmobile" and able to fit in or under a number of modern aircraft. The most widely used Wiesel is the Wiesel I and there is also a Wiesel 2 which has an extra road wheel and longer hull.

First impressions may lead one to think that the Wiesel 1 Mk 20 and the TOW variant are basically the same. However, the Wiesel 1, TOW is not a Mk20 with a different turret. There is a difference between the two. The TOW variant has a slightly different hull and carries a crew of three, instead of a crew of two as in the Mk20.

The "Weasel," as we call them in the states, is powered by a two-liter, 5-cylinder turbo charged 86 horse power Volkswagen diesel, coupled to a three speed automatic transmission and two speed transfer case.

Believe it or not, a skilled crew can swap power packs within 15 minutes with the help of quick disconnect fittings and a special lifting frame or conventional hoist.

At the rear of the Wiesel is an expandable rubber gas tank, which holds close to 19 gallons or (80 Liters) of diesel.

This mechanical rodent can slither along at (75 km/h) 47 miles per hour, which is about 10 mph faster than the WWII U.S. Weasel.

Of special interest to me was the type of track used in the modern Wiesel, as I own a U.S. M29 WWII Weasel which uses a continuous twisted steel cable reinforced rubber track that is somewhat similar to the modern German Wiesel.

The Wiesel 1 Mk 20 is equipped with a gas operated, electrically fired, turret mounted Rheinmetall 20mm Automatic canon. A disintegrating belt feeds in at the top, and carries 100 rounds on the right and 60 rounds on the left. This arrangement allows the gunner to choose what type of ammo he needs, depending on the specific target. The full auto rate of fire is 800 to 1000 rounds per minute.

The Kit

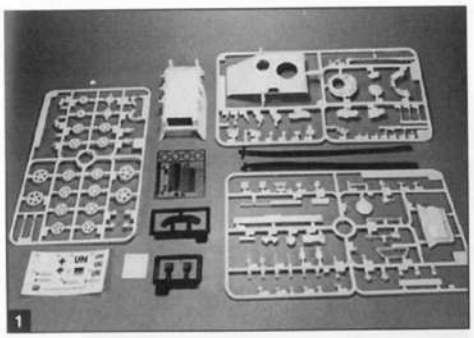
Upon opening the box, I found some very white plastic. This later proved to be kind of a pain to work with because it was hard to see the mold seams and joints. The quality and surface detail is very, very good, from the finely molded headlight conduits to the fine ridges on the outside of the gas filler cap.

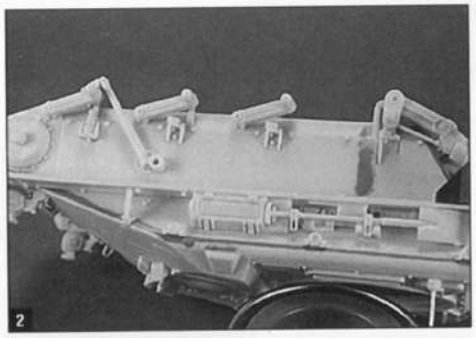
Aside from the 120 plastic parts, there is a photo-etch fret with various tie downs, buckles, hatch handles, muffler guard, mud flaps, and sprockets. Also included are three sprues of vinyl, which contain the one-piece vinyl tracks, disintegrating ammo belt and front mud flaps, all of which accept liquid cement or super glue. The decals include standard Bundeswehr markings, as well as UN markings while in Somalia.

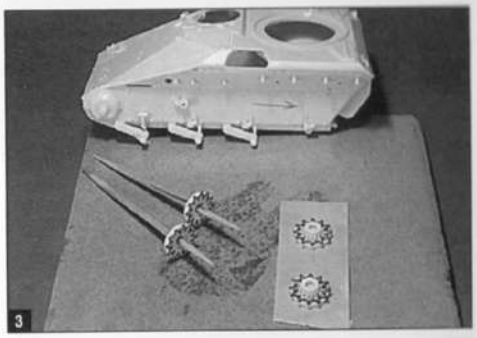
The first thing I do when I open a model box is start dry fitting parts together. I check to see what parts I can assemble that will need to have seams or gaps filled. This allows me to move on to other assemblies while the filler is drying, usually parts like the lower and upper hull, gun breaches, gun tubes etc. I assemble these parts first if I am absolutely sure that it will not interfere with the rest of the assembly process.

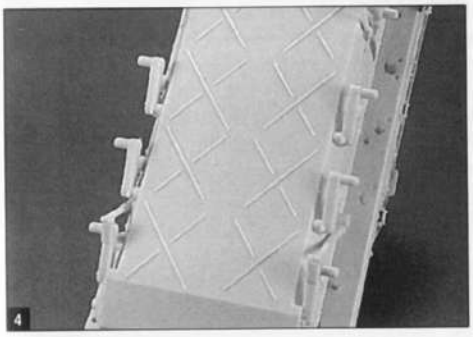
I assembled the hull first and filled the seams and sinkholes, of which there were two rather large ones on each side of the lower hull in front of the idler wheels. The same was done to the 20mm gun receiver, which had to have its alignment pegs removed in order to get it to mate somewhat accurately.

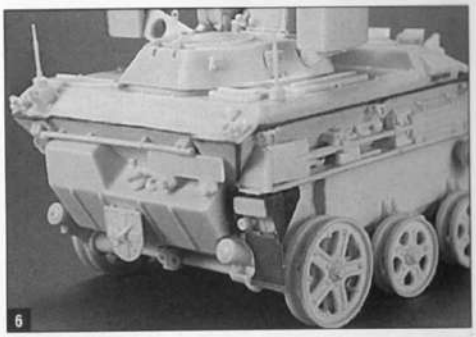
The 20mm ammo cans had their seams filled and the top overlapping edge of each ammo can was sanded down to give a more in scale effect. At this time I drilled out the gun barrel, then moved on to

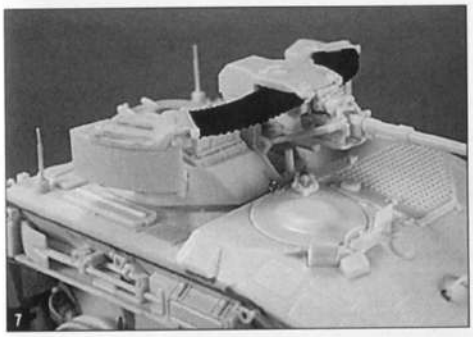


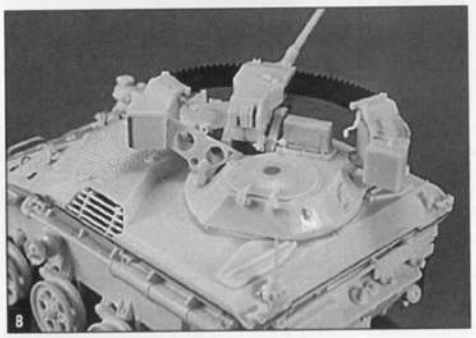


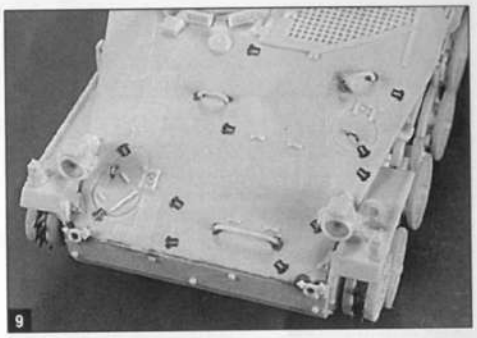


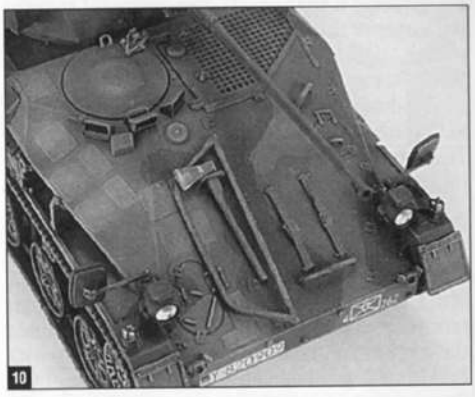












1. All the parts laid out. The number of parts and the photo-etch make this kit a pretty good value. 2. There are small gussets under each of the road wheel arms and these need to be removed. Also in this photo you can see the result of a small sink hole in the hull side. 3. Two suggestions on how to handle the drive sprockets. 4. The ultra realistic hull bottom. The X at the lower left (under the engine) is larger than the rest, just like the real thing. 5. The vehicle just before the addition of the fenders. 6. The right rear, showing off the photo-etched parts. 7, 8. The flexible ammo belts needed some trimming, but they looked good. I added the small hook in photo 7 just above the hatch. 9. This shows the installation of the photo-etched latch through the surface of the front end. I drilled out the headlights to receive MV lenses. 10. The finished kit, showing off the front mounted tools.

assemble the road wheels and photo-etch sprockets. By the way, these were a very nice detail that was easy to assemble. A word of caution though on the road wheels: they can be put together wrong so be sure and double check to make sure all your spokes line up.

In order to model a realistic suspension, you will have to remove some reinforcing gussets between the outer lower hull and the idler arms. This may have been designed to help support the idler arms during shipment, or possibly to aid in the molding process. Either way they are kind of a pain to remove.

Details, details, details...

Because of its small size, there are some very fragile pieces in this kit. I left the antennas off until just before it was painted and ended up breaking one anyway.

There are so many small parts that three weeks later I still have a dent in my forehead from my binocular magnifier!

The right side fender, with tool stowage and various brackets, was added next, along with the right rear photo-etched mud flap and tail light assembly. The tail pipe on the muffler was drilled out for added detail and the headlights were drilled to accept MV Lenses #L116.

The kit supplied plastic hatch handles were used, although they needed to be thinned out a bit. The Wiesel does have some very thick handles though, so don't go overboard here. The smaller flat photo-etched hatch handles were replaced with small gauge wire. I do not like flat hatch handles.

Another very fragile assembly was the rear view mirrors, which I left off until last, as well. I used bare metal foil on these to give a more natural appearance.

When I have a small model like this that is light weight I occasionally will glue a flattened fishing sinker in the bottom of the hull just to give the kit a nice feel when you pick it up. This also helps to weight the tracks down to the surface that the model rests on.

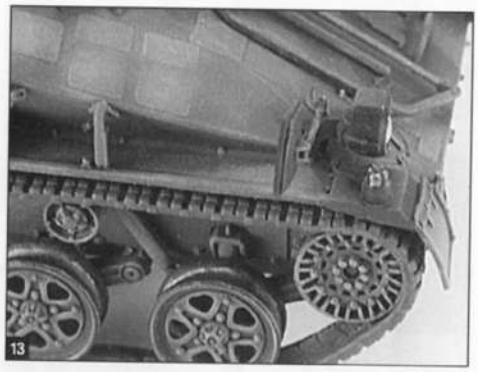
The turret ring was too tight and needed to be opened up a small amount in order to allow the turret to rotate. The ammo feed belt caused a bit of a problem as well and I had to trim away a small portion of the vinyl in order to get the top cover, part (D-10) to fit down properly. Just a little notch in front where it meets the cover was all that was needed. Removing the positioning pins on the belt also made things easier.

I wanted to position the gun in an elevated position but the stiffness of the vinyl belt prevented it. Once the stabilizers, parts (D-9) were in place, the gun was fixed in one position anyway. I imagine if you wanted to spend a little time here you could stretch the belt and make longer stabilizers. I would like to have done this if time permitted. I think it looks great with the gun elevated.

The gun control cable was modeled with small gauge wire. My references lead me to believe that there may be two cables side by side here, but I could not tell for sure. Your references may show this detail better.

Photo-etch stuff

I left the photo-etched muffler guard and associated parts off until the model was painted so I could get an accurate color on the exhaust pipe without getting over spray all over it. The muffler guard was kind of fumbly to handle. I added a rein-



11, 12. Two views of the finished rodent as seen from above. The kit is highly detailed for such a little model. 13. One of the nicer details of the kit, the thinly molded head light conduits. 14. Check out the fine detail on the back, especially on the edges of the gas cap. I drilled out the tail pipe at lower left. 15. It sure is small! This shot shows the installed MV lenses. I put a lead sinker inside to help the kit sit flat.

forcement piece between the front and rear sections, which helped keep both pieces in line while super gluing it to the body. You may want to paint the inside of the muffler guard before attaching it to the body to keep the stainless from showing through from the top.

Tie down straps were added to the engine cover at the front upper hull once the model was finished. These straps are used to stow the camouflage netting and were found in my references.

Painting

The standard Bundeswehr color scheme is bronze green (RAL 6031), leather brown (RAL 8027), and tar black (RAL 9021). The instructions recommend Tamiya XF-58, XF-64 and XF-1. I used these colors for the base coats but finished up with dry brushings of Model Master European I Dk. Green, which I felt looked better than Tamiya's XF-58. Tamiya's XF-64 Red Brown worked fine and I finished up the black with Humbrol 123.

A wash of burnt sienna oil paint and flat black enamel cut with turpentine was mixed together and used to represent shadows and the highlights were dry brushed with the base colors lightened with white.

My references show the pioneer tools in a natural wood finish and also painted in body color. I chose to do something different this time and paint them body color.

All Bundeswehr vehicles spend considerable time on the road and as a result there are a number of taillights and turn signals required. These were painted first with Model Master Chrome Silver. The stoplights were then coated with Tamiya Clear Red, and a mixture of Clear Yellow and Clear Red was used for the turn signals.

The tracks and mud flaps were painted next with Model Master Euro I Gray. They were then hit with the previously mentioned wash and dry brushed with lightened Euro I Gray.

My references show bright metal on the inner surface of the road wheels which I dry brushed Testors silver, and the rubber on the wheels was painted with Model Master flat black.

The antenna bases looked more like olive drab in my references and that is what I painted them. The kit antennas were replaced with fine gauge wire.

Maintenance markings were painted red on the center of the road wheels and the periscopes were painted flat black with an overcoat of Tamiya Clear Gloss.

The actual vehicles had a slight sheen to the camo but I like my models to look like they have been used and I applied a light layer of dust with a dry brushing of Model Master Armor Sand to finish up.

Tracks & Decals

I usually save the tracks for last if at all possible and I leave the road wheels loose until I paint and wash the rest of the model. This helps me get a uniform weathered finish on the lower hull behind the suspension. Like I mentioned earlier, the tracks are the one-piece continuous vinyl type and they do accept liquid cement or super glue very well. My tracks were too tight, which caused me to panic early on, but because of the type of material used all I had to do was stretch them ever so gently in about two or three different places to bring them to the needed length. Once the tracks were glued together, I placed all of the road wheels, idlers, and return rollers onto the hull and put on the tracks.

The decals went on without any problem. I used the standard Bundeswehr markings which are for the 4th Company 262nd airborne battalion.

Conclusion

All in all this was a very enjoyable kit to build, it assembles well, it is nicely detailed and appears to be accurate, although I do not have any drawings to compare it to. The photo-etch set looks very nice on the model and was reasonably easy to assemble.

So if you are looking for a nicely detailed kit to put together in a short amount of time this is one. Oh...and don't forget the binocular magnifier. Enjoy!

—Barry Beaudry

MMiR RECCE

AFV Club Wiesel 1 Mk20. Kit number AF35S-05. Kit graciously supplied by the manufacturer's U.S. representative, Marco Polo Imports. Suggest retail price $29.98.

References

Airborne elite (2) NATO's Northern Flank by Yves Debay & James Hill - Concord Publications Co., 1995. ISBN: 962-361-719-4. Excellent color shots of the Wiesel on maneuvers including a few shots of it boarding a CH-53 helicopter.

Waffentrager "Wiesel" by David R. Haugh - Darlington Productions, Inc., 1996. A great B&W photo book with dozens of detail photos of both versions.

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Mini-Men

A Look at What's New on the Figure Front

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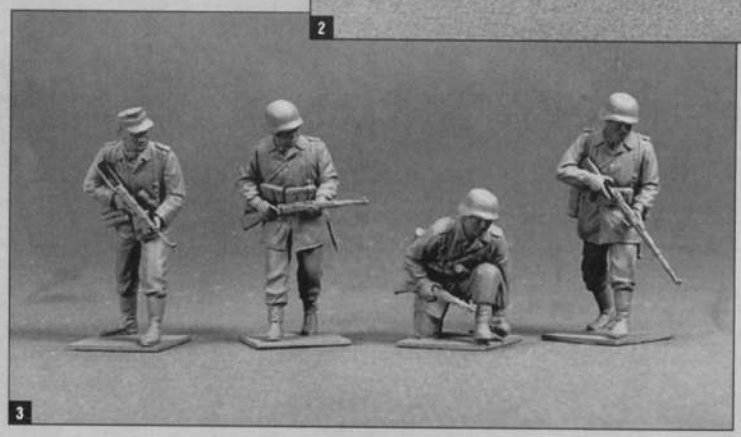
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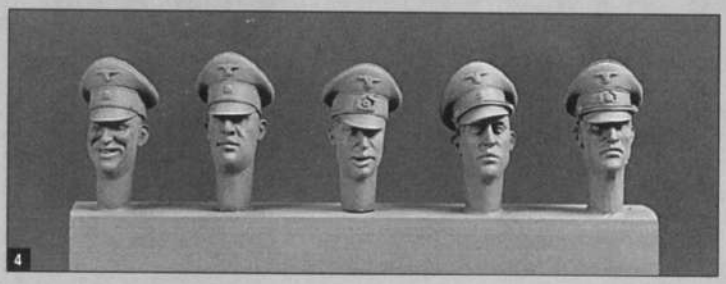
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We present to you a somewhat more abbreviated version of Mini-Men this time around. This is due to the large number of plastic kits to your immediate left. We'll be back up to larger proportions in future issues.

APC 1/35

Who? Yep, that's what we said. APC is better known for selling retail mail order than anything else. But up pops a figgy in resin, so we take it! The figure is titled **Joe Backfield (1)** and the title is followed by the little fellow's specs: 5'6" 140lbs, 3rd Marine Division, GUAM 1944. The figure is packed in a simple poly bag with a photo of said Joe and the miniature is dead on. We have a feeling that the current version of Joe Backfield no longer fits the above specs... The rendering is great and the construction is no problem, although aligning the arms and hands takes a bit of care. We especially like the way the BAR fits into the molded-on sling. We hate doing slings. Another nice detail in the fact that his knife scabbard is empty... Little Joe would look fab standing in front of a KO'd Type 95.

DML

Two interesting sets from the DMLsters. The first is **6077, German Fallschirmjägers w/ Donkeys (2)** and it depicts two dudes hauling a radio set with the help of a donkey. These little critters have been popping up in DML sets as of late. This little vignette also includes a small donkey which is following the first as if it's his mother. However, observant individuals may notice a small biological problem with the sculpture of the "mother." To be perfectly blunt, he's hung like a donkey. In spite of this small anatomical problem the set is interesting and it includes the very competent DML German radio set and good gear and weapons for the figures.

The next set is **6084, 16th Luftwaffe Field Division (Normandy 1944) (3)**. Although the set gets a special time period, the uniforms depicted are the standard type seen on Luftwaffe field divisions throughout the war. Three of the figures wear the standard camo smock seen in use at this time in both Army and Luftwaffe units. This is a longer cut and is usually printed with the "Zeltbahn" pattern. The fourth figure is dressed in the basic field uniform and his MP40 indicates he's the squad leader. This particular uniform is an interesting color being a faded blue drab. This set didn't go together as well as others we've reviewed, but it's not beyond the skills of most modelers to correct it.

Hornet Miniatures

Hornet has really stepped up the release of its new head sets. We have two of the latest. The first is **HGH11 German officer heads wearing Schirmütze cap SS and Army (4)** and as usual it consists of five finely sculpted heads immaculately cast in gray resin. As the title states there is a mix of SS and Army pattern hats and the sub-miniature "Totenkopf" are perfectly rendered. The impact of the formal style cap is also well captured here and one of the hats is executed with the double braid of a general officer. At least four of the expressions are new to the line and simply staring at them conjures up dozens of uses. Another "must have" from Hornet.

The second is **HUH4 Heads wearing US M1 helmet with netting (5)**. This is very similar to their earlier set of bare M1 helmets and like the earlier set this one will find many uses beyond its description. Two different types of netting is depicted, the larger unofficial type and the finer issued style. Again, dozens of uses abound for these and it makes us wish for a few more good U.S.

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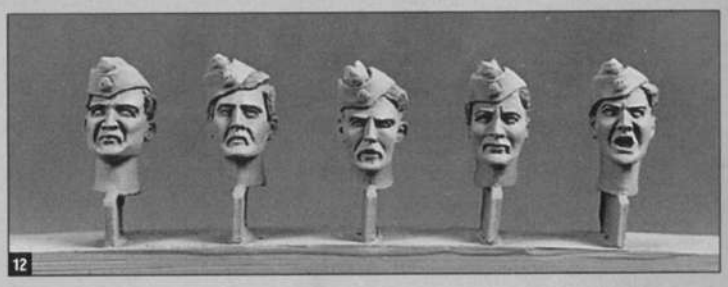
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infantry figures. These heads will also find a use on your next tank crew.

Jaguar

These guys have really been blowing us away lately. They have released some very elaborate sets (with more on the way—see Short Takes) and have also done some superb simple items as well.

First up this time is the excellent **63056, Weisel Crew (6)**, a three man set for the AFV Club kit. It's composed of two half-dudes for the hatches and one very mean looking rider. All are dressed in the very weird garb of the modern German Fallschirmjäger Korps, which consists of a distinctly Soviet looking helmet and a thick flak vest complete with hefty shoulder pads. This particular uniform is cut in a camouflage pattern that is highly reminiscent of SS style color patterns. Neato.

The third, full figure carries his G-3 assault rifle at the ready and the model is complete with a delicately molded folding stock. He carries a second magazine in his right hand. Look out!

Next up is **63043, Street Fighters Berlin 1945 (7)**. This is two action posed figures best shown creeping around a corner or hunkered down next to a building. Both represent two distinctly different styles of uniforms although both still are indicative of the types of clothing seen in use at this stage of the war.

63047, Firefight Ardennes II, 1944 (8) is another two figure set with two apparently SS troopers wailing away. The uniforms look much like those worn by SS units in the Ardennes, especially SS Panzer Grenadier Regiment 1. These are also the soldiers depicted in Ron Volstad's famous illustration in the Osprey series. It's very interesting seeing these types of figures in action poses and the one firing his Sturmgewehr is especially effective. This is the second of two sets which could be the beginning of a great little dio or vignette.

One of the coolest things to come don the pike in recent years is **63048, Last Stand in Stalingrad (9)**. This is a three figure vignette that includes a base. The scene is based on a famous WW2 painting that appeared on the cover of the wartime German publication *Die Wehrmacht*. (This painting can be found on the VP sticky poster sheet 1264.) The scene has been impeccably rendered and we really dug the heavily detailed base. All the figures go together easily, but there is a bit of filling necessary on the base. You'll have a ball with this one. A painted version of this won a Gold at Euro Militare in 1997.

One piece that is not reviewed here is **Berlin Street Fighters 1945-I** and it consists of an entire destroyed street arch and base. This a very elaborate and complete instant diorama that will be built, painted and reviewed in a future issue of MMiR.

Ultracast

This is a new name to us but this Canadian company is off to a good start. The first of the three reviewed here is **35008, Canadian/Commonwealth Tank Crew - Late 1944/45 (10)**. This is a three half figure set that is specifically designed for the DML Firefly kit. All wear the infamous "Pixie Suit." Four separate heads are provided for the smaller half figures and the commander figure fits real well into the round hatch of the Sherman. It seems it wouldn't take much to adapt them to the new Cromwell kit.

Two heads sets are next. The first is **35009, German Heads WWII, SS Panzer Crew (11)** and it is a simple, five piece set with all but one head wearing head phones and a side cap. The fifth head is decked out with a big bandage. A small piece of styrene strip is provided in the set to form the tops of the head phones.

The next set, **35010, German Heads WWII, SS Panzer Crew**

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#2 (12) is similar, but this time all the heads are sans head sets and many of the expressions are different. All the heads in both sets are sculpted with the Totenkopf symbol on the fronts of the forage caps.

Verlinden

VP continues with its useful complete vignettes with **1292 "Spoils of War" (13)**. This is a full resin set with ammo crates, food and other resin bits, as well as a ton of molded on detail. The two dog faces are basic winter 1944 types and the scene might well be intended to be Bastone.

1305, Panzer Mechanics (14) is another two figure set, this time complete with extra tool bits and a small fret of etched wrenches and other small tools. We like the way one of the figures is instructing the other in the fine art of turning a bolt (must be an officer).

Warriors

We dip our hands in the Warriors river and grab out the following. First is a rad two figure set, **35138, German Medic Helping Comrade (15)**. This is basically one guy picking up another, but the pose works quite well with the helper really seeming to heft the other dude. There's lots of great detail in this set, too. The medic's kit is well done and the SS trooper on the ground is complete with a nasty leg wound.

A really neat one is **35158, Jäger der SS Handschar Division (16)**. He's just sort of hanging out (hey—no donkey jokes!) with a genuinely bad-ass look on his face. He could be leaning against a wall or whatever you've got. He could also be simply and effectively converted just by lopping off that fez and replacing it with the separately molded helmet.

You Hellcat fans will love the next two. **35156, US Tank/Tank Destroyer Crew (17)** is one of two designed especially for the Hellcat kits currently out. This set is just the two half figures and the "smokin' Joe dude. The next set **35157, US Tank/Tank Destroyer Crew (18)** is the two standing and leaning types to complete the five man crew. Both sets are sold separately.

Wolf

We don't get much from these guys, but the latest was worth the wait. **WAW 25 German Tankman in Reed-Green Uniform WW2 (19)**, is an elegantly simple little figure that is molded in one piece. He wears the commonly seen red-green uniform used in the warmer climes. Although his panzer wrap is hanging by his side, his shirt underneath has been "badged up" which was a common practice. The perfect companion for your next German armor model.

YANKS

Just the one from Yanks this time around, but it's a doozy. **9710 Dead Japanese Solider (20)** is one of the best we've seen from these guys so far. It is a one piece molded dead guy and his integral base contains a wealth of little details that tell the whole story of this unfortunate little fellow. First off, his glasses are broken right in two, indicating he caught one right in the noggin.' Secondly, his clothes are disheveled and his papers are strewn around his torso and head indicating he's been rifled by souvenir hunters. And lastly, his right arm has been lashed with a rope, an all too common GI practice to prevent accidental denotation of booby traps.

There are several possibilities for use here, perhaps with a few Jarheads standing around casually checking him out. A gruesome, but effective little model.

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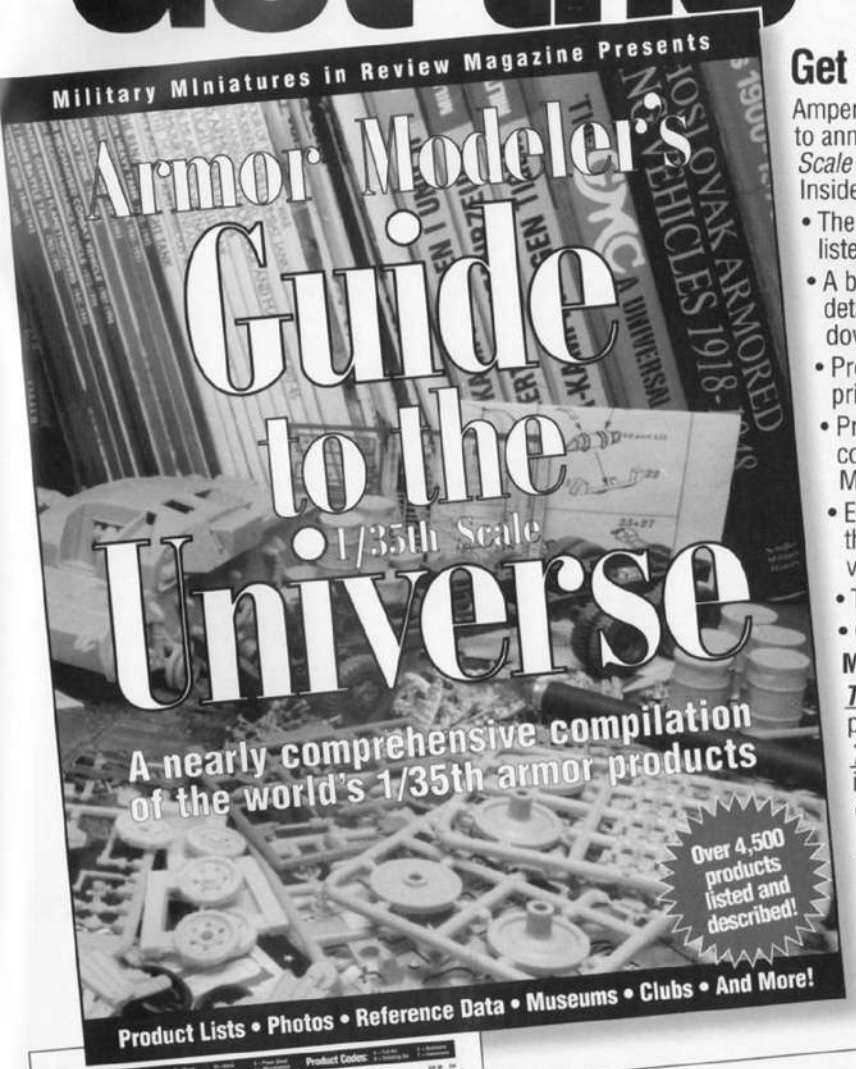
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Sherman Guide Update: For all of you that are anxiously awaiting *The Modeler's Guide to the Sherman*, it has been delayed due to a death in the author's family but it will be released soon. Thank you for your patience!

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FOR SALE: U.S. made plaster, resin, plastic and other scale modeling & diorama accessories. Buildings, structures, road beds, display bases, conversion parts, etc... Send 3 stamps - or $1.00 to cover postage for lists and information to: TIM TAYLOR ENTERPRISES, 475 W. Stetson, #C-320 Hemet, CA 92543 USA.

WANTED: Monogram 1/32 scale Armor Kits, Airfix 1/32 Scale multipose Japanese Figures, Airfix 1/32 Scale Armor and Related vehicles, (hey Airfix—reissue your stuff, American model geeks want it), Airfix Multi-pose 8th Army. Contact Tim Taylor Enterprises, 475 W. Stetson #C-320, Hemet, CA 92543 USA.

WANTED: Items listed below. No time limit. Please include phone number and price/condition first letter. Books/Mags: Complete or partial set of AMM Review. MMiR V1 #s 1, 2, 4, V2 #1. Military Model Preview (formerly Military Aircraft Preview) V1 #s 1-3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12; V2 #s 1, 10-12; V3 #s 1, 4-12. Catalogs: DML/Dragon 90, 88, 87; Italeri 94, 88, 87, 85, 82, 81, 80, 77 and earlier; Tamiya 94, 78, 77, 71 and earlier. Please only full size, No Mini-cats or brochures. Hardbounds: Bound V2 Profiles British AFVS 1919-40. I also need info, reference sources, photos and TM on: Semiltrailer, Refrigerator, 5 ton. Good copies acceptable. Dio accessories and buildings: 1/35 Deauville (resin) #106 Ruined 2 story (large), #110 'The Bridge,' #112 Loghouse. Kurton #007 3 Story 3 sided ruin, Magus Program Design I/35 French Corner Cafe (foamcore), Russian wood house, Small wood barn. Any Magus blueprints needed also. US Airfix edition of #51513 1/32 Checkpoint (includes humpback bridge, gate, guardhouse, tower). Kits/Figures: CMS (resin) 1/35 Diamond T Wrecker and Cargo trucks. Italeri Bersaglieri infantry. MAX #04 1/35 1/4 ton Ford GP Jeep/trailer and base. VMK (resin) 1/35 #001 U7144 Jumbo Jeep 5 ton tractor, #002 C-2 multipurpose semitrailer. Tamiya 1/25 Patton, Radio Operator. Squadron Combat Line and Squadron Rubin figures. **FOR SALE:** Professionally built, 1/25 scale tanks. Used by Soviet Army as training aids. For details LSSAE. All replies to: M.C. Overstreet, 5257 Luwana Drive S.W., Roanoke, VA 24018-3323. (540) 774 7244 after 7PM Eastern.

U.S. Resin Kit Manufacturer seeking master pattern makers for armor related subjects, i.e. kits conversion, figures. If interested please send name and address, phone number to: Commander Series Models, Inc. 551 Wegman Road, Rochester, NY 14624.

I would like to correspond with modelers all over the world. Looking for someone to swap materials with, or just chatter about kits. I build mostly present day vehicles, diorama and figures of Special Forces. Theo Naus, Esdoornstraat 4, 5995 AM Kessel, The Netherlands.

WANTED: HELP! Does anyone out there have a VMK kit #004 "Remorque Transport de Char" M9 45 ton tank transporter. Looking for the unbuilt resin kit. I have the tractor and need the trailer. Please contact Mike Maggio c/o Ampersand.

AVAILABLE: Professional custom build-up of kits, modifications, scratchbuilding, figure painting and display case. Contact Steve Gordon, Iron Shipwright Studios, 40 Dierdre Dr., Rochester, New York 14617. (716) 544-4528 EST.

WANTED: US Battle Tanks Today (Tanks Illustrated #8); Remembering The Gulf War, The Marine Corps Association; Born In Battle Magazine, Eshel Dramit Ltd., Issues 3, 4, 6, 11; War Data Series, Eshel Dramit Ltd., Issues 1, 10; Mid-East War 5 Volume Set, Eshel Dramit Ltd. Joseph Chiaramonte, 8711 26 Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11214.

Modeler from the Ukraine who would like to get in touch with other modelers to exchange models. I am looking for contacts with North American modelers. I will answer all letter sent to me. Andrey Kozlov, Zvenigorodska, 12 kw. 43, Zaporozhye - 93, 330093, Ukraine.

FOR SALE OR TRADE: ESCI (German), Supply Wagon, Ambulance Wagon, German Sappers, Rest Area, Paratroops, Engineers, 7.5cm Light Inf. Gun, British Red Devils. Airfix: Japanese Multipose 1/32 Infantry. Monogram: Calliope Sherman, Hedge Hog (1/32nd scale). All kits unbuilt, mint in box. WANTED: Tamiya Tigers, Panthers, Halftracks, Marx 1/32 figures and playsets. Ron Angleton, 316 Oak St., Tipton, IN 46072. (765) 675-3907 weekends.

WANTED: Unbuilt old Italeri kits, #234 (SdKfz. 234/3), #255 (SdKfz. 234/4). Sturm und Drang Magazines, Jean Restayn's Tanks of WWII; Encycolpedia of german Tanks of WWII; Ground Power Magazines. George Krausse, P.O. Box 3152, Florence, OR 97489.

FOR SALE. Now is the time to get serious about completing your Squadron in Action collection. Armor in Action #I through 8, and 17. Also many Aircraft in Action and Aerographs. Send LSASE to George E. Kohler, 7170 Columbia Rd. Pataskala, Ohio 43062.

TRADE/BUY: unbuilt, built or damaged large scale armor kits (1/25 or larger), especially I/9 ESCI Kübelwagen, Kettenkrad and cycles, 200mm WWII figures, seeking copies of Ryton Books PANTHER and TIGER I IN DETAIL. Bob Johnson, P.O. BOX 13156, Prescott, AZ 86304, (520) 708-0721 evenings.

WANTED: Information about clubs or individuals who are interested in 1/24th and 1/25th scale armor models. Also interested in purchasing same. Terry Hoepf, 5606 N. River Road, Pemperville, OH 43450. 419-287-4202.

WANTED: 1/35th scale "Top Brass" (Tyresmoke, England) British and U.S. Sherman accessory packs. Any reasonable price paid. Jim J. Burns, 189 Oak Road, Danville, CA 945256. 510-838-1595.

BUYER BEWARE: Anyone experiencing service or refund problems from Gary Simpson, AFV Panzer HRC, Boise, ID is requested to contact Miles Twaddell, P.O. BOX 120, Pluckemin, NJ 07978.

WANTED: Drawings or photographs of the following: M667 Lance Missile Carrier, M727 HAWK Missile Carrier, RCM748 Tracked Rapier. Steve Kemmerly, 1761 William Drive, Penngrove, CA 94951.

FOR SALE: from Artist-illustrator acrylic oil on Bristol card, A3 size, from 400.00 U.S. List for 2 IRC to :Mr. H. Cance, 56, Bd. E. Lintilhac,15000 Aurillac, France.

FOR SALE: 1/35th DML and Tamiya armor, Verlinden accessories. Send LSSAE to Lance Bevins, 5429 Whisper Creek Lane, Wilmington, NC 28409-2552

ARMOR, AIRCRAFT & SHIP COLLECTION: Over (450) 1/35scale armor, 1/350 scale modern warships, and both 1/72 & 1/48 scale modern jet aircraft. WW2 to modern armor and figure kits. Both current and out of production kits. Also, many resin conversions and full kits. Decal set and ceramic diorama kits. Many kits still wrapped. All unbuilt and unpainted. GREAT DEALS! Send LSSAE with $.55 postage for list with asking prices. Allen Chubb, Jr., P.O. Box 134, Lykess, PA 17048-0134 or call 717-362-1120 after 6 p.m. EST.

FOR SALE: ModelKasten Workable Track Sets, $29.95 each postpaid; SK-1 Tier I late, SK-2 Tiger I early, SK-6 Tiger II, SK-10 Panther A/G, SK-17 Panzer III/IV late Type A, SK-18 Panzer III/IV mid Type A, SK-21 Jagdtiger, SK-22 Panzer III/IV late Type B, SK-23 Panzer III/IV mid Type B, SK-27 Panzer IV final. SK-25D Panzer II/Wespe with metal drive sprocket, $32.95 postpaid. John Kernan, 96 Beacon Hills Drive North, Penfield, NY 14526 716-671-8719, 6-9 p.m. EST.

FOR SALE: AFV-G2, one complete set; Fine Scale Modeler, one complete set. For Sale as sets only. Bid Sale. WANTED: Ground Power, Issues 2, 4, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 25 ,26 ,29, 33, 34 and 36. Jordan Jones 817-294-3785.

MUST SELL: Loose the kits or hit the couch! Sound familiar? The answer is simple for many, the couch doesn't talk back. Unfortunately, it's her couch. My loss can be our gain. New/OOP WW2 figures/armor kits (1/35) for sale. Tamiya, Italeri, DML, ESCI. Send SASE for complete list to Lawrence Jung, 60 E. 12th St., #3F, New York, NY 10003-5036.

FOR SALE: Built 1/35th scale armor kits. These are nicely done with some external detailing. Please advise your particular needs/wants. Will consider requests to build. Currently over 100 finished. Bill Whitley, 311 Bundy Avenue, Endicott, NY 13760. 607-748-7922 IPMS #20778.

FOR SALE: 1/35th Scale AZIMUT Char De Rupture 2C, sealed in original box. $150.00 Also, MB resin kit 1/35th, Pz IIIE, opened but never removed from box, $75.00. Contact (408) 295-9689.

WANTED: Highly competent armor builders who can photograph and write about their modeling projects. Adequate writing and photography skills, and computer literacy a must. Fees paid for article submissions. Also looking for modelers willing to execute simple, clean build-ups (no painting) for a fee. Also looking for individuals willing to submit original historical research articles. Access to archival photographs a must and ability to render scale drawings in Adobe Illustrator or Freehand a big 'ol stankin' plus. Contact: Editor MMiR, 235 NE 6th Ave #4, Delray Beach, FL 33483.

Every subscriber to Military Miniatures in Review is entitled to a free classified ad for one year. Submit ***TYPE WRITTEN COPY ONLY*** *(no chicken scratchings). There is no space limit, but be as brief as you can (we mean: don't be a hog about it). Corrections, sales or omissions should be brought to the attention of the publisher as soon as possible to prevent re-occurrence.*

BRIT GRIT

Fans of British armor have another reason to celebrate with the release of Tamiya's new Cromwell Mk.IV Cruiser Tank Mk. VIII, A27M. A light and fast cruiser tank, designed to quickly punch through enemy defenses. The Cromwell proved to be popular among its users as its reputation for speed and reliability grew with the series progressions.

Tamiya's Cromwell captures all of the detail of the original tank in 1:35 scale.

The upper hull features the usual tools including three tool boxes. The Christie designed suspension has been recreated along with accurate renditions of the road, idler and sprocket wheels. The kit even allows the relocation of the suspension arms with the removal of a locator pin.

Hatches on the upper hull can be placed in open or closed position, and the supplied commander figure may be placed within his hatch. The front Besa machine gun is ball joint mounted for a greater range of positions.

When you have completed your Cromwell, finish it off with one of five types of decals, including the Royal Guards and a Polish unit. Tamiya even has a separately released photo etched grill set (#35222) for enhanced detail.

The Cromwell Mk. IV by Tamiya, British fire power in 1:35 scale.

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